

**The Relationship between Expatriate Job Deprivation and  
Thriving at Workplace: Examining the Antecedents,  
Moderator, and Outcomes**

By

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## DEDICATION

*To my beloved parents, faithful wife, lovely children, and  
dear sisters*

## ABSTRACT

Due to the continuous pressures emanating from today's global economy, multinational corporations (MNCs) expanded their internationalised operations by placing substantial amounts of foreign direct investment (FDI) in a myriad of developing host countries. One of these developing countries is Egypt that was ranked in the top 5 host countries in the North Africa region, receiving the largest amount of FDI. This, in turn, increased the likelihood of relocating expatriates in the country and the necessity of effectively managing their international assignments. However, not all international assignments are successful due to several reasons, such as maladjustment issues, the inappropriate selection of the right expatriates with the necessary personal resources in their talent pipeline to navigate stressful events during assignments, and the lack of thriving driven by job deprivation issues. This study seeks to shed further light on the precise causes of this condition. Thus, drawing on the central tenets of the institutional theory, the two integrated relative deprivation and self-determination theories, and the conservation of resources theory, the present study contributes to the extant expatriation and international business literature by examining a set of relationships: (1) the institutional distance (ID) between Egypt and the expatriate's home country and expatriate's job deprivation regarding autonomy, competence, and relatedness; (2) adjustment and expatriate job deprivation; (3) job deprivation and thriving at workplace; (4) the moderating role of cross-cultural psychological capital (CC-PsyCap) in the expatriate job deprivation-thriving relationship; (5) CC-PsyCap and thriving; and (6) expatriate thriving and willingness to share knowledge with local employees, intention to renew current international assignment in Egypt, and performance.

Data were collected from a sample of 313 business expatriates who work in the foreign subsidiaries of foreign organisations in Egypt. Using structural equation modelling to test the hypothesised model, the empirical results demonstrated that ID had a differential effect on the three aspects of job deprivation (autonomy, relatedness, and competence). Results also unfolded that expatriates' adjustment had a significant negative effect on job deprivation. Additionally, job deprivation had a significant influence on thriving. Although the direct effect of CC-PsyCap on thriving was significant, its moderating effect on job deprivation-thriving linkage was not significant. Finally, expatriate thriving was found to be a significant catalyst for knowledge sharing willingness, current assignment renewal intention, and performance. Accordingly, the study's results suggest that expatriates' success on international assignments entails crafting a thriving host workplace where they should possess high levels of psychological resources in their talent pipelines and their host jobs' needs should be highly fulfilled relative to their previous home jobs' ones.

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## LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

AE	Assigned Expatriate
AGFI	Adjusted Goodness of Fit Index
AMOS	Analysis of Moment Structure
AVE	Average Variance Extracted
BNT	Basic Needs Theory
CAPMAS	Central Agency for Public Mobilisation and Statistics
CC-PsyCap	Cross-Cultural Psychological Capital
CD	Cultural Distance
CET	Cognitive Evaluation Theory
CFA	Confirmatory Factor Analysis
CI	Cultural Intelligence
CFI	Comparative Fit Index
COT	Causality Orientation Theory
CR	Composite Reliability
EFA	Exploratory Factor Analysis
FDI	Foreign Direct Investment
GFI	Goodness of Fit Index
GOF	Goodness of Fit
HRM	Human Resource Management
IA	International Assignments
IB	International Business
ID	Institutional Distance

IHRM	International Human Resource Management
KS	Knowledge Sharing
KT	Knowledge Transfer
M	Mean
MNCs	Multinational Corporations
NFI	Normed Fit Index
NNFI	Non-Normed Fit Index
OCB	Organisational Citizenship Behaviour
OIT	Organic Integration Theory
P-E Fit	Person Environment Fit
PNFI	Parsimony Normed Fit Index
PsyCap	Psychological Capital
RDT	Relative Deprivation Theory
RMSEA	Root Mean Square Error of Approximation
RNI	Relative Non-Central Index
SC	Social Capital
SD	Standard Deviation
SDT	Self-Determination Theory
SEM	Structural Equation Modelling
SIE	Self-Initiated Expatriate
SRMR	Standardised Root Mean Residual
TLI	Tucker-Lewis Index



# **Chapter One: Introduction**

## **1.1. Research Background**

Today's global economy has imposed ongoing pressures on multinational companies (MNCs) to grow and internationalise their business operations, which in turn, increased the importance of effective international assignments (Tungli and Peiperl, 2009, Kim and Slocum-Jr, 2008). Such conglomerates place substantial investments in the form of foreign direct investment (FDI) to execute their business operations in different host countries (Kyove, Streltsova, Odibo, and Cirella, 2021). The previous decades have attested substantial FDI inflows via MNCs in developing countries (Ramamurli, 2004). Developing nations, as host countries, seek to attract FDI to accomplish some benefits, such as access to resources, economic growth, knowledge and technology transfer, import and export network development, and the creation of job opportunities for locals (Kinda, 2010).

As one of the developing countries, Egypt is ranked by the recent world report as “the top five host developing nations, with the largest recipient of FDI in North Africa increased by 11% to \$9 billion, and 41% of MNCs' reinvested earnings.” These improved figures are attributable to the Egyptian government that aimed to improve macroeconomic stability and augment foreign investors' trust in the country (UNCTAD, 2020, p.12-33). This surge of FDI inflows increases the likelihood of foreign companies' business operations in Egypt, which increases the likelihood of relocating a large number of expatriates on international assignments in the country. Accordingly, the purpose of the present study is to examine the predictors, moderators, and consequences of the relationship between expatriate job deprivation and thriving at workplace.

At its generic term, expatriates contend with individuals who reside and work in a country they do not hold citizenship of for a temporal period (Harzing, 2004; Dowling and Welch, 2004). Some authors focused on the assigned expatriates (AEs) (also referred to in the literature as traditional, corporate, and business expatriates); those who are assigned by the headquartered business and governmental organisations on temporary assignments to achieve organisational objectives (Aycaan and Kanungo, 1997; Adler, 2002; Harrison, Shaffer, and Bhaskar-Shrinivas, 2004; Suutari and Brewster, 2009). However, other accounts suggested the expansion of the concept to involve self-initiated expatriates (SIE); those who took the initiative of relocation to work abroad (Suutari and Brewster, 2000) to gain cultural experience, develop their career, and accomplish personal goals (Andresen, Bergdot, and Margenfeld, 2013). Recent research has recognised the absence of a clear and comprehensive definition for the term “business expatriates” and questioned whether this term could apply to SIE. To reconcile this discord, McNulty and Brewster (2017) drew on the prototype theory to develop a prototype for business expatriates with 4 criteria that together are adequate to constitute the type of business expatriates: employment, temporal period, non-citizenship, and legal compliance. Based on this prototype of 4 boundary conditions, they defined business expatriates as “legally working individuals who reside temporarily in a country of which they are not a citizen to accomplish a career-related goal, being relocated abroad either by an organization, by self-initiation or directly employed within the host-country” (McNulty and Brewster, 2017, p.46). This inclusive definition is adopted in the present study, but it is noteworthy to mention that, regarding the temporal period, the focus will be on long-term assignees (1-5 years).

Despite the emergence of multiple patterns of international assignments (Collings, Scullion, and Morley, 2007), a recent survey on global mobility trends reported that more than 50% of

expatriates are sent on long term (1-5 years) international assignments (KPMG, 2020). Accordingly, the effective and efficient management of assignments has become an imperative quest, given that expatriates hold very expensive talents, and the costs of assignment failure are high (Hippler, Caligiuri, Johnson, and Baytalskaya, 2014). It is widely argued that such assignments provide MNCs and their assignees' distinctive growth and development chances (Firth, Kirkman, and Kim, 2014). For MNCs, expatriates are utilised to accomplish strategic objectives, such as training domestic employees, transferring knowledge, monitoring the subsidiaries' financial performance, eliminating hurdles between the host and home country (Brewster, Sparrow, Vernon, and Houldsworth, 2016), occupying positions in host countries with lack of qualified locals, and developing expatriates' competencies (Edstrom and Galbraith, 1977). Concomitantly, expatriates perceive overseas assignments as a positive opportunity for enriching personal life and enhancing personality developments, ameliorating communication, interpersonal, and managerial skills, and enhancing career advancement (Stahl, Miller, and Tung, 2002).

Considering the significance of international assignments in MNCs due to the failure of many of them (Tung, 1987), researchers have given greater attention to the criteria of expatriate effectiveness/success and its determinants. Overseas success has been conceptualised in different ways, such as performance, commitment, adjustment, satisfaction, assignment completion intention (Kraimer and Wayne, 2004; Wang and Takeuchi, 2007; Thomas and Lazarova, 2012), work engagement, and actual retention (Ren, Yunlu, Shaffer, and Fodchuck, 2015). Fundamental to all the constructs of expatriates' success are three common themes: adjustment to new cultures; remaining in the overseas position until the end of the assignment; and superior performance (Aycan and Kanungo, 1997). However, expatriates are sent overseas

for job performance rather than well-adjustment (Sinangil and Ones, 1997; Hippler, 2014). Reiche, Lazarova, and Shaffer (2014) argued that organisations should be more concerned with whether the short and long-term objectives of assignments have been accomplished rather than simply looking at their expatriates' adjustment. Moreover, willingness to remain is argued to be an insufficient guarantee that expatriate assignment achieved its return on investment (Thomas and Lazarova, 2012). In this essence, besides the importance of expatriate performance, it is essential to stretch the concept of success to encompass new criteria. In particular, the present study seeks to partially depart from the previous traditional views and define expatriate success in terms of willingness to share tacit-knowledge, intention to renew the current assignment, and performance.

The concept of *willingness to share tacit-knowledge* is cast as the degree of expatriates' inclination or readiness to allocate time and exert effort to engage in sharing tacit-knowledge with local employees (Jiacheng, Lu, and Francesco, 2010; Chang, Gong, and Peng, 2012b). This concept focuses on two aspects: (1) the perspective of expatriates' willingness as "organisational knowledge largely resides within individuals"; and (2) the tacit nature of knowledge as it remains in expatriates' minds unless exposed to local employees (Bock, Lee, and Zmud, 2005, p.89). Also, the willingness aspect is claimed to be crucial for knowledge sharing (KS) success (Bock et al., 2005) and expatriate effectiveness (Chen, Kirkman, Kim, and Farh, 2010). Therefore, achieving success in this criterion is considered as expatriates' success as they accomplished one of the significant objectives of sending them abroad (Bonache and Brewster, 2001; Brewster et al., 2016). Following the literature on KS (Jiacheng et al., 2010; Boch et al., 2005; Lin, Wu, and Lu, 2012), willingness will be employed as a proxy for actual KS behaviour.

The second criterion diverts from the extensive negative (e.g., withdrawal cognitions and premature repatriation) and limited positive insights (e.g., completion of current assignment/actual retention) and takes a much broader positive outlook to introduce the novel concept of *current assignment renewal intention*. Due to the non-availability of a specific definition of this concept in the extant expatriate literature, the present study drew on previous scholars' logic in "withdrawal intention" literature (Shaffer and Harrison, 1998; Firth et al., 2014; Bhaskar-Shrinivas, Harrison, Shaffer, and Luk, 2005; Pinto, Cabral-Cardoso, and Werther-Jr, 2012) to introduce a definition for this concept as the personal thoughts and plans to rejuvenate the current assignment after its official end and remain in the host country for another similar period. This concept is expected to reflect successful expatriate assignments as expatriates may seek the repetition of positive experiences (Collins, 1993; Kark and Carmeli, 2009). Third, *expatriate performance* will be examined as a multifaceted construct in terms of both task and contextual performance. *Task performance* is defined as "the expatriate performance on meeting job objectives and technical aspects of the job" (Kraimer and Wayne, 2004, p.211). *Contextual performance* refers to the capacity to effectively develop and maintain good relationships with the host country's workplace nationals (Harrison and Shaffer, 2005; Lee and Sukoco, 2010).

Although numerous existing studies examined the interconnection of success criteria, with adjustment as a dominant predictor (see Kraimer and Wayne, 2004; Wang and Takeuchi, 2007; Firth et al., 2014), the study by Ren et al. (2015) suggest that it is time to shift focus beyond adjustment and look at the positive motivational construct of thriving that has been proven to be a significant predictor of expatriate success with respect to actual retention and work engagement. They further argue that "thriving is particularly relevant in expatriate context

because it reflects a positive and meaningful experience for expatriates”, given the intrinsic values they expect from international assignments regarding competencies development and personal life enrichment (Ren et al., 2015, p.70). Following this suggestion, thriving will be examined as a potential antecedent of the three aforementioned success criteria, namely performance, knowledge sharing willingness, and current assignment renewal intention.

*Thriving* is conceptualised as “the psychological state in which individuals experience both a sense of vitality and a sense of learning at work” (Spreitzer, Sutcliffe, Dutton, Sonenshein, and Grant, 2005, p.538). Both learning and vitality capture the cognitive and affective components of thriving, respectively, which function as a powerful thermometer of progress and momentum for thriving individuals at work and whether they act in a positive direction (Spreitzer et al., 2005; Porath, Spreitzer, Gibson, and Garnett, 2012). The creation of a thriving workplace is important for organisations as it improves their employees’ physical and mental health (Spreitzer and Sutcliffe, 2007). A growing body of research had been conducted on thriving in the domestic work setting, and its importance has been captured in promoting several work outcomes, including (but not inclusive) job performance (Porath et al., 2012; Frazier and Tupper, 2018), proactive behaviours (Niessen, Sonnentag, and Sach, 2012), innovation and creativity (Carmeli and Spreitzer, 2009; Wallace, Butts, Johnson, Stevens, and Smith, 2013), commitment (Li, 2015; Kleine, Rudolph, and Zacher, 2019), burnout (Porath et al., 2012; Kleine et al., 2019), and job satisfaction (Jiang, 2020). However, a paucity of research on thriving and its outcomes in the expatriate context is manifested in the sole study by Ren and her associates (2015).

Besides its potential predicting role in three outcomes of expatriate success, it is quite essential to investigate its determinants. Spreitzer et al.’s (2005) “socially embedded model of thriving”

is premised on the tenets of self-determination theory (SDT) (Ryan and Deci, 2000), which alleges that individuals are, by instinct, motivated to seek growth and development that are contingent on the conditions of the social context. This motivational theory claims that individuals feel self-determined when they are gratified with three basic needs: relatedness, competence, and autonomy. In their most recent framework of human growth, Spreitzer and Porath (2014) suggest that the satisfaction of these three needs is a stimulant for thriving. Evidence from domestic research reported that, together, satisfying these three needs significantly induced vitality and subjective learning (Bartholomew, Ntoumanis, Ryan, and Ntoumani, 2011; Bauer and Mulder, 2006). In the intriguing study by Ren and peers (2015), the initiative was taken to integrate the SDT with the relative deprivation theory (RDT) (Crosby, 1976) to examine the concept of job deprivation regarding the three needs and their effect on thriving. The latter theory (RDT) explains relative deprivation as a disparity between what a person expects and what a person actually receives. Specifically, it is argued that expatriates might experience job deprivation when their three needs are thwarted due to social comparison with local peers in similar positions at the host work environment, and subsequently, this will diminish thriving. Indeed, their approach of social comparison with other referents was found to be pervasive in several expatriate studies on relative deprivation (see Toh and Denisi, 2003; Leung et al., 2009; Mahajan, 2011; Hon and Lu, 2015; Kraimer, Shaffer, Harrison, and Ren, 2012). Nonetheless, the results of Ren and associates' (2015) study supported only the significant influence of job deprivation-competence on thriving, thereby contradicting domestic research results and the aforementioned theoretical assumptions of the SDT and models of thriving.

Although their study enlightened the researcher's understanding of the job deprivation concept due to social comparison and its role in predicting thriving, one important question should be raised here: Does job deprivation emerge only from social comparison with "other/external referents"? Relative deprivation theorists provided an answer by highlighting that relative deprivation can be triggered due to self-comparison (i.e., self-referent approach) when a person compares himself/herself with himself/herself or compares his/her current position with a past or future one (Kulik and Ambrose, 1992; Crosby, 1982; Folger, Rosenfield, and Robinson, 1983; Seepersad, 2009). For expatriates, the prestige of overseas jobs is ranked as the fourth important impetus to go abroad (Stahl et al., 2002), and therefore, they build more positive expectations about it. Thus, after arrival (on the actual experience), they are more likely to delve into self-comparing the superiority of host job attributes relative to their prior post in the home country. If found below expectations, this may engender job deprivation (Erdogan and Bauer, 2009). Therefore, it is important to understand the extent to which expatriates' three needs of competence, relatedness, and autonomy are more/less fulfilled in the host jobs in comparison with their previous home ones. Based on this, the current study defines *expatriate job deprivation* as the degree of discrepancy between what expatriate expects, and he/she actually perceives regarding the three attributes of their jobs (Kraimer et al., 2012; Ren et al., 2015), including competence, relatedness, and autonomy, due to self-comparison. In essence, the present study tends to address job deprivation from the self-reference perspective and examine its impact on thriving.

If job deprivation is conceived as a stressful event, it is expected for expatriates' thriving to suffer. Thus, the question should be: who is the right person (i.e., expatriate) who possess sufficient personal resources/traits in his/her talent pipeline, so that he/she may navigate such



stressful event and thrive on his/her international assignment? A recent survey by Brookfield (2016) highlights that the selection of an inappropriate person is ranked as the second reason underlying unsuccessful assignments. This fact amplifies the significance of personality traits when selecting expatriates and justifies the tremendous studies that focused on the role of different personality traits in predicting expatriate outcomes. However, the majority of expatriate personality literature has been heavily tilted toward stable traits, dominated by the big-five personality typology (openness, conscientiousness, emotional stability, agreeableness, and extroversion) (see Shaffer, Harrison, Gregersen, Balck, and Ferzandi, 2006; Huang, Chi, and Lawler, 2005; Caligiuri, 2000; Dalton and Wilson, 2000; Bruning, Sonpar, and Wang, 2012; Lee and Sukoco, 2010; Wilson, Ward, and Fischer, 2013; Mol, Born, Willemsen, and Van Der Molen, 2005), self-mentoring personality (Caligiuri and Day, 2000; Kim and Slocum-Jr, 2008), proactive and self-control personality (Lauring, Selmer, and Kubovcikova, 2019) social desirability and superiority striving personalities (Ren, Harrison, Shaffer, and Bhaskar-Shrinivas, 2016), affectivity (Stoermer, Lauring, and Selmer, 2020; Selmer and Lauring, 2013), and emotional intelligence (Koveshnikov, Wechtler, and Dejoux, 2014). Another stream shifted the focus on two dynamic traits, such as self-efficacy (Osman-Gani and Rockstuhl, 2009; Shaffer, Harrison, and Gilley, 1999) and cultural intelligence (Lee and Sukoco, 2008; Abdul Malek and Budhwar, 2013; Lee, Veasna, and Wu, 2013; Setti, Sommovigo, and Argentero, 2020; Chew, Ghurburn, Terspstra-Tong, and Perera, 2019). Although both strands have increased the comprehension of the role of different types of personality characteristics in explaining expatriate outcomes, such as adjustment or performance, there exists a scant of knowledge on the positive dynamic resource of psychological capital.

As a positive higher-order construct, *psychological capital (PsyCap)* is defined as “an individual positive psychological state of development that is characterised by self-efficacy, optimism, hope, and resilience” (Luthans, Avolio, Avey, and Norman, 2007, p.542). PsyCap is described as a “State-Like” feature as it is developmental via practice and training relative to the immutable (big five) traits typically known as “Trait-Like” (Luthans et al., 2007). It is suggested that globalised companies should pay attention to the development of their employees’ PsyCap to promote the benefits of a diverse workforce (Combs, Milosevic, Jeung, and Griffith, 2012). Since it was first coined and validated by Luthans et al. (2007), a plethora of studies on PsyCap and its work outcomes evolved over the past decade, and the meta-analysis by Avey, Reichard, Luthans, and Mhatre (2011) reported that PsyCap had a superior direct effect on the employees’ attitudes and behaviours, with a positive association with organisational commitment, satisfaction, performance, psychological well-being, and citizenship behaviour, and negative association with job stress, cynicism, anxiety, counterproductive workplace behaviours, and turnover intentions. This meta-analysis showed some boundary conditions (e.g., culture and type of industry) of the PsyCap-work-outcomes relationship; however, it did not consider studies on the moderating role of PsyCap. However, a review conducted by Newman, Ucbasaran, Zhu, and Hirst (2014) highlighted a few studies that examined the interaction impact of PsyCap with some variables in predicting outcomes, with inconsistent results regarding whether PsyCap alleviates the negative impact of stressful events on work outcomes. Accordingly, Newman et al. (2014) suggested that more attention should be devoted to understanding whether PsyCap is really a reliable psychological resource that individuals can recall in order to mitigate the impact of various challenges encountered. In addition, the majority of research on PsyCap has been undertaken in domestic work, thereby leaving limited knowledge on its role in the international context for expatriates.

To the best of the researcher's knowledge, only three studies have extended the concept to the international setting, following the notion that PsyCap is context-specific. Two studies distinguished the concept of PsyCap by adding the prefix of "cross-cultural/cultural" and adapted the original scale by Luthans et al. (2007) to fit in the cross-cultural context. Their findings unveiled that cross-cultural PsyCap is crucial for motivational cultural intelligence, which in turn, results in metacognitive awareness (Yunlu and Clapp-Smith, 2014; Dollwet and Reichard, 2014). The third study has focused on *cross-cultural PsyCap (CC-PsyCap)* training regarding the four ingredients of optimism, hope, resilience, and self-efficacy and its influence on minimising ethnocentrism, enhancing cultural intelligence, and acquiring higher levels of cross-cultural PsyCap (Reichard, Dollwet, and Louw-Potgieter, 2014). However, the most common drawback existing in the empirical aspect in these three studies is that their respondents were not a specific cohort of expatriates on assignments, as just targeted people who had cultural/international experience by virtue of travelling and living outside their country of citizenship for a period of time. Taken all together, the present study will focus on expatriates' CC-PsyCap role that seemed to not to be given adequate attention and validation so far and examine its potential boundary condition spinoff in responding to the stressful construct of job deprivation in its relation to thriving. This expectation draws on the conservation of resources (COR) theory tenets stating that individuals' responses to stressful situations hinge on the levels of psychological resources they possess, and those with high levels of personal resources (self-efficacy, optimism, self-efficacy, and hope) are more capable of "selecting, altering, and implementing their other resources to meet stressful situation" (Hobfoll, 2002, p.308). Besides, the direct relationship between CC-PsyCap and thriving will be investigated in this study. Although the domestic research documented the existence of this relationship (Paterson, Luthans, and Jeung, 2014; Nawaz, Abid, Arya, Bhatti, and Farooqi,

2020), it is still worth establishing its theoretical foundations and empirical testing in the expatriation realm.

Even if cross-cultural PsyCap may attenuate the negative event of expatriate job deprivation, it is still important to comprehend the reasons that are more likely to contribute to the three aspects of job deprivation, the issue that has been omitted in Ren et al. (2015). In the domestic literature, Spreitzer and Porath (2014) have theoretically identified some contextual factors that nurture the satisfaction of the three basic needs of competence, relatedness, and autonomy, including the climate of trust/respect, decision-making discretion, performance feedback, environmental turbulence, and broad information sharing. Other associates focused on the role of corporate social responsibility (Hu, Liu, and Qu, 2019) and HRM practices in the fulfilment of these job needs (Gagne, 2009; Marescaux, De Winne, and Sels, 2013). However, as the deprivation of these three needs will be examined in the expatriation context, the present study tends to scrutinise two potentially relevant antecedents that have not been explored before, namely institutional distance and adjustment.

*Institutional distance (ID)* is embedded in the core of institutional theory. From a sociological view, institutions are classified into three main pillars, namely cultural-cognitive, regulatory, and normative, and these three elements collaboratively maintain stability and create a meaningful life for social actors (Scott, 2014). Drawing on this sociological viewpoint, ID is cast as “the difference/similarity between the regulatory, normative, and cognitive institutions of two countries” (Kostova and Zaheer, 1999, p.71). This concept has gained broader popularity in the field of international business (IB) due to its significance for MNCs’ strategic decisions and outcomes. Specifically, a substantial body of research examined ID in predicting MNCs’ decisions associated with entry mode choice in foreign markets (Yiu and Makino,

2002; Demirbag et al., 2010; Hernandez and Nieto, 2015; Chang et al., 2012a), ownership structure (Liou et al., 2016; Powel and Rhee, 2016; Xu et al., 2004; Contractor et al., 2014), subsidiary performance (Gaur and Lu, 2007; Shirodkar and Konanva, 2016; Liou and Rao-Nicholson, 2017; Lazarova, Peretz, and Fried, 2018; Bauer et al., 2018), managerial practices transfer (Clark and Lengnick-Hall, 2012; Haak-Saheem, Festing, Darwish, 2017), and expatriate and local staffing (Ando and Paik, 2013; Ando, 2014; Fee et al., 2017).

While this vast amount of studies progressed research on the effect of objective ID at the country level on organisational decisions and outcomes of MNCs, there seemed to be a salient neglect to how subjective ID may help in explaining individual attitudes and behaviours. To the best of the researcher's knowledge, only one study by Ramsey (2013) recognised the importance of this issue, and therefore, developed and validated a multidimensional measure of ID at the individual to be employed in the international work context. In addition, after cross-validating this measure and confirming its multidimensionality, the previous author found that perceived/subjective ID was significantly associated with the job strain and travel strain for international business travellers. Given the scant knowledge on ID and its outcomes at the individual level, more research is still required in this neglected zone. This is particularly important as institutionalists argued that the influence of institutions is not limited to organisations but can be extended to individuals' (e.g., expatriates) attitudes and behaviours (North, 1990; Scott, 2014). Accordingly, the current study will subjectively examine ID as an antecedent of expatriate job deprivation.

Concerning the second expected antecedent, *expatriates' adjustment* is defined as the extent to which expatriates are psychologically comfort and familiar with the novel situation and culture with respect to three facets: work (i.e., carrying out job duties and responsibilities), interaction

(i.e., socialisation and interaction with local hosts), and cultural/general (i.e., daily life conditions in the host environment regarding entertainment, accommodation, food, and cloths) (Black and Stephens, 1989; Black, 1990). This tripartite taxonomy has been empirically underpinned by Shaffer et al. (1999). Adjustment has been the most dominant and frequently examined construct in a massive body of expatriation literature, which in general, reveals that adjustment yields positive outcomes, such as job satisfaction (Shaffer and Harrison, 1998; Bhaskar-Shrinivas et al., 2005; Hechanova, Beehr, and Christiansen, 2003), organisational commitment (Gregersen and Black, 1992), life satisfaction (Kim, Choi, and Li, 2016), knowledge transfer (Lee and Karatika, 2014), and performance (Kraimer, Wayne, and Jaworski, 2001; Qin and Baruch, 2010; Lee et al., 2013; Shaffer et al., 2006). It was also found that adjustment attenuates unfavourable outcomes, such as withdrawal cognitions, turnover intentions, premature repatriation intentions (Shaffer et al., 2006; Kim et al., 2016; Firth et al., 2014), and job strain (Hechanova et al., 2003). With respect to dimensionality, some scholars noted that only two facets of adjustment (interaction and work) are more effective in capturing expatriate outcomes (Lee, 2010; Lee et al., 2013). This is evident and supported by the frequently captured non-significant of general/cultural adjustment in some expatriate studies (see Kraimer et al., 2001; Wang and Takeuchi, 2007; Abdul Malek and Budhwar, 2013). Based on this, only the two effective dimensions of adjustment (interaction and work) will be adopted in the present study. By and large, despite being a key influencer of myriad expatriate outcomes, the potential relationship between adjustment and expatriate job deprivation regarding the three needs is still unknown and will be inspected in the present study.

## **1.2. Research Objectives**

Based on the research background presented above, the overarching purpose of this research is to investigate the predictors, moderators, and consequences of the relationship between expatriate job deprivation and thriving at workplace. To achieve this purpose, the following objectives/aims have been formulated:

1. To examine the relationship between ID and expatriates' perceived job deprivation regarding autonomy, competence, and relatedness.
2. To investigate the relationship between expatriates' adjustment and their perceived job deprivation regarding autonomy, competence, and relatedness.
3. To probe the relationship between expatriates' perceived job deprivation regarding autonomy, competence, and relatedness and thriving at workplace.
4. To examine whether CC-PsyCap will play a moderating role in the relationship between expatriates' perceptions of job deprivation with respect to autonomy, competence and relatedness, and thriving at their workplace.
5. To investigate the relationship between CC-PsyCap and expatriates' thriving at workplace.
6. To probe the relationship between thriving and expatriates' willingness to share tacit knowledge.
7. To examine the relationship between thriving and expatriates' willingness to renew their current assignment
8. To investigate the relationship between thriving and expatriates' performance.

### **1.3. Research Questions**

To achieve the abovementioned objectives/aims, the following research questions have been developed:

1. Is there a statistical relationship between ID and expatriates' perceived job deprivation regarding autonomy, competence, and relatedness?
2. Is there a statistical relationship between expatriates' adjustment and their perceived job deprivation regarding autonomy, competence, and relatedness?
3. Is there a statistical relationship between expatriates' perceived job deprivation regarding autonomy, competence, and relatedness, and thriving at workplace?
4. Does expatriates' CC-PsyCap play a moderating role in the relationship between expatriates' perceptions of job deprivation with respect to autonomy, competence and relatedness, and thriving at their workplace?
5. Is there a statistical relationship between CC-PsyCap and expatriates' thriving at workplace?
6. Is there a statistical relationship between thriving and expatriates' willingness to share tacit knowledge?
7. Is there a statistical relationship between thriving and expatriates' willingness to renew their current assignment?
8. Is there a statistical relationship between thriving and expatriates' performance?

### **1.4. Significance of the Study**

The present study's significance emerges from the expected contributions, which will add to the expatriate and international management literature by filling in several extant gaps. To clarify these potential contributions, this study draws on Colquitt and Zapata-Phelan's (2007)



taxonomy, in which they argue that empirical research can provide theoretical contributions toward both theory building and theory testing. Both dimensions take several forms as follows:

First, one form of theoretical contribution toward theory building is the constructive replication that intentionally attempts not to assimilate prior research methods to generate a different way of testing replicated findings. This kind of replication is useful in cross-validating previous research's findings and advancing scientific knowledge. In this essence, this study builds on and expands Ren et al.'s (2015) study by replicating the integration between both self-determination (Ryan and Deci, 2000), and relative deprivation theories (Crosby, 1982) as a fruitful lens for identifying and comprehending the drivers of expatriates' thriving in the host workplace. However, what really makes the present study unique is twofold: (1) unlike their social comparison (others referent) approach, the current study will adopt the "self-referent/comparison" approach that is still under-researched in the expatriation relative deprivation literature. This approach is anticipated to be more relevant and important than the "others -referent" (i.e., comparison with local colleagues) in capturing job deprivation for expatriates in the Egyptian context where expatriates manage and supervise local colleagues who occupy less prestigious jobs compared to expatriates; and (2) it endeavours to uncover the left-hand side (antecedents) of expatriates' deprivation regarding the three psychological needs (i.e., reasons/factors contributing to expatriates' perceived job deprivation regarding the three basic needs). Besides, it is worth mentioning that it also directly responds to Gagne and Deci's (2005) call that recommended paying increased attention to the empirical examination of the SDT because it received a limited application, particularly in the organisational setting. Additionally, it contributes to theory building in another way by investigating a prior theorised effect as Spreitzer and Porath (2014), in their framework towards human growth, theoretically

proposed the imperative need to gratify the three psychological needs of competence, relatedness, and autonomy to augment thriving.

Second, another form of theory-building contribution is through introducing novel moderators or mediators of an extant relationship. Hence, the present study navigates beyond the hegemonic concentration on expatriates' immutable personality traits and introduces the COR theory as a theoretical platform to shed a spotlight on the important role of expatriates' personal dynamic psychological resources (i.e., individual differences) on international assignments. In particular, this study devotes attention to expatriates' CC-PsyCap that, to date, received limited attention in the expatriation literature (with exception, Yunlu and Clapp-Smith, 2014; Dollwet and Reichard, 2014). CC-PsyCap will be investigated as a boundary condition (moderator) of expatriates' perceived job deprivation-thriving linkage, thereby providing a dual advantage. On the one hand, this will allow identifying when job deprivation is more or less likely to influence thriving or how expatriates may react differently and cope with stressful situations based on how much they possess of this caravan of resources (cross-cultural hope, self-efficacy, optimism, and resilience). On the other hand, this also will address an important empirical gap, given the dearth of research on the boundary condition of PsyCap as noted in Avey et al.'s (2011a) meta-analysis and Newman et al.'s (2014) review. Furthermore, the direct effect of cross-cultural PsyCap on thriving will be examined. Such a relationship was theoretically developed and empirically tested in the domestic setting. Although this is considered as an operational replication (i.e., following the same method of a previously published study) towards theory building contributions from Colquitt and Zapata-Phelan's (2007) perspective, it is necessary to re-examine the same relationship, but for the first time in the international setting, to explicate whether having positive psychological resources is essential for fostering

expatriates' well-being and psychological functioning in the international setting, similar to the situation of employees in the domestic domain. In this connection, Paterson et al. (2014) suggested that it is meaningful to specify the nature between these two positive work-related constructs to stimulate exploring convergence between positive organisational scholarship (Cameron, Dutton, and Quinn, 2003) and positive organisational behaviour (Luthans, 2002b). In doing so, this will contribute to the "socially embedded model of thriving" by Spreitzer et al. (2005) and the "integrative model towards human growth" by Spreitzer and Porath (2014) through introducing personal dynamic attributes as a potential enabler of thriving when transferring their models in the expatriate context.

Third, theory-building contributions can exist when examining relationships unexplored before and introducing novel constructs. Related to this point, research on thriving and its outcomes in expatriation context is still in its infancy, and therefore, the present study attempts to fill in this void and contribute to thriving literature by examining some novel significant outcomes: (1) thriving will be empirically linked with expatriates' willingness to share tacit-knowledge with local colleagues. Such a novel relationship has not been studied before, neither theoretically nor empirically, in both domestic and international settings. The researcher, interestingly, will embrace the "complementary theories" approach that draws on employing multiple theories to generate comprehensive insights to explain empirical outcomes (Cairney, 2013). This approach is effective due to the complexity attached with human behaviour that needs to be scrutinised from different angles (Price, Jhangiani, and Chiang, 2015). Specifically, the present study will complement Spreitzer et al.'s (2005) model of thriving with each of the social capital (Nahapiet and Ghoshal, 1998), social exchange (Homans, 1958; Blau, 1986), and prosocial motivation (Grant 2007; Grant and Berg, 2011) theories in explaining why thriving

may foster expatriates' willingness to share tacit-knowledge. Thus, it should be noted that these three theories are complementing, not competing, with Spreitzer et al.'s (2005) in understanding why this relationship exists from three different angles. From another perspective, this will add to the literature on knowledge sharing by explaining the importance of embedding thriving in the host social work environment as a potentially crucial factor for facilitating knowledge sharing; (2) moving beyond prior expatriate research that conventionally concentrated on withdrawal cognitions (Shaffer and Harrison, 1998; Shaffer et al., 2006; Wang and Takeuchi 2007), assignment completion intention (Kraimer and Wayne, 2004), and actual retention (Ren et al., 2015), the present study shifts attention to a broader positive view to introducing the novel construct "intention to renew current assignment" as an outcome of thriving; and (3) although the linkage between thriving and performance was theoretically and empirically verified in the domestic setting, it is still important to re-examine this relationship in the international context to ensure congruence with the domestic one. Despite being regarded as an operational replication toward theory-building contributions, this addresses Ren et al.'s (2015) call urging future researchers to examine performance as an outcome of expatriates' thriving.

Fourth, continuing with the exploration of novel relationships with no previous examination, the present study will address this in two other relationships. Although Ren et al. (2015) raised the researchers' awareness of the job deprivation concept and its relation to thriving, they did not consider the antecedents of this negative construct. Thus, the present study will investigate two potential antecedents of job deprivation, namely ID and adjustment. Despite the increasing uptake and voluminous work exerted in dozens of studies regarding the influence of ID (at the country level) on numerous organisational outcomes of the foreign subsidiaries as noted in the

background, there is more salient ignorance of the phenomenon (ID) and its outcomes at the individual level. Considering the latter neglected research avenue is quite important because institutionalists, ranging from North's economic institutionalism (1990) to Scott's sociological/organisational approach (2014), all supported the notion that institutions not only affect organisations but individuals' (e.g., expatriates) attitudes and behaviours as well. Therefore, this study will also contribute to the literature on ID to examine its direct effect on expatriates' job deprivation with respect to the three needs of relatedness, competence, and autonomy. For this purpose, this study will utilise sociological/organisational institutional theory (Scott, 2014) complemented with the Person-Environment (P-E) fit theory (Edwards, 1996) to better understand why differences in (regulatory, normative, and cultural-cognitive) institutions between countries may exacerbate and configure expatriates' psychological feelings of job deprivation with regard to three essential needs on their international assignments. The second potential predictor is expatriates' adjustment that has been linked to some negative outcomes, such as job strain (Hechanova et al., 2003). However, it is still unknown whether it may predict the three aspects of job deprivation, and such a relationship will be understood utilising the stressor-stress-strain theoretical framework (Harrison et al., 2004). In the meantime, both anticipated predictors may also contribute to the self-determination theory literature when applied in the international context by identifying ID and adjustment as novel determinants of the three basic needs' satisfaction/thwarting.

Fifth, high theoretical contributions can also be accomplished via theory testing, in which empirical studies' predictions are grounded with extant theories, models, diagrams, and figures (Colquitt and Zapata-Phelan, 2007). In this regard, all the present study's expected hypothesised relationships will be developed and driven by the theoretical assumptions of the

aforementioned well-established theories/models to explain the processes underlying the predicted relationships.

Sixth, in addition to its theoretical contribution, the current study has one significant empirical contribution. The majority of expatriate research considering the theoretical constructs of adjustment, ID, job deprivation, CC-PsyCap, thriving, knowledge sharing, and performance, have overwhelmingly been conducted on expatriates in Western and Asian societies. Thus, the room of research on expatriates is still quite limited despite the huge numbers of expatriates working in the peripheral of the Middle East, as recently outlined by Budhwar, Pereira, Mellahi, and Singh (2019), who urged future researchers to examine the factors contributing to expatriates' success in this region. Accordingly, the present study will take the initiative to further widen this ignored avenue and enrich expatriation research by examining the hypothesised model and collecting data from the unique and hardly accessed cohort of diversified expatriates working in the subsidiaries of foreign organisations in Egypt. This will also allow the testing of Western theories and validating their measurements in the largely under-researched Egyptian context.

Seventh, in the case of having the hypothesised relationships confirmed, the expected results will provide significant practical implications for HR practitioners in MNCs regarding job design, training, recruitment, and selection of expatriates (as will be discussed in chapter 7).

## **1.5. Research Methodology**

As being situated within the “positivism” research paradigm, the current study adopted a cross-sectional research design for accomplishing its objectives. The study targets a unique population, comprising all expatriates working in the subsidiaries of foreign organisations with

joint ventures operating in both the industrial and service sectors in Egypt. Given the difficulty associated with primary data collection in Egypt that requires special, tiring, and governmental permissions (e.g., security approval) (Hatem, 1994; Leat and El-Kot, 2007; Parnell and Hatem, 1999) and the distinctive nature of expatriates who are described as a “hard to access” cohort (Culpan and Wright, 2002), a combination of both convenience and snowball sampling techniques were employed to reach the narrow expatriate community in Egypt.

Both electronic and paper and pencil questionnaires were used to gather the present study’s data. The data collection stage ended up with receiving a total of 313 useable questionnaires, categorised as 249 e-versions and 64 hard copies. The response rate, however, could not be estimated due to the lack of information on the total actual questionnaires among expatriates in some of the accessed companies because some HR/administrative managers were reluctant to declare such information, considering the data privacy issue. Two statistical packages were used for data analysis purposes: Stata 15 and AMOS 25. The former was employed for descriptive statistics, whereas the latter was used to utilise both confirmatory factor analysis and structural equation modelling to assess the overall measurement model and the hypothesised structural model, respectively. To ensure the transparency of data gathered from the same source (i.e., expatriates), some procedural<sup>1</sup> and statistical<sup>2</sup> remedies were conducted to handle the common method bias (CMB).

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<sup>1</sup> Some procedural remedies were employed in the design of the questionnaire to eliminate CMB, which will be discussed in chapter 5 in more details.

<sup>2</sup> Two statistical techniques were employed to detect the potential existence of CMB: Harman’s Single Factor Test and Common Latent Variable Test. The results of both tests will be presented in chapter 6.

## **1.6. Structure of the Thesis**

Besides this first chapter that presents the research background, problem statement, research questions and objectives, the significance of the study, and research methodology, this thesis is composed of further six chapters. Chapter two provides an extensive review of the literature, key theories, and previous empirical research related to the concepts of ID, expatriates' adjustment, job deprivation, thriving, CC-PsyCap, willingness to share tacit-knowledge, current assignment renewal intention, and expatriates' performance. This, in turn, helped to identify the research gaps currently existing in the extant literature.

Chapter three sheds light on the contours of the Egyptian national context by delineating the key features of the institutional and cultural environment of Egypt as a host country where expatriates work in the subsidiaries of foreign organisations with joint ventures. This chapter places emphasis on several themes of the Egyptian context, including Egypt's demographic profile, economic and legal context, political economy, sociocultural and religious contexts, as well as the managerial and HR practices at the Egyptian workplace. Chapter four discusses the theoretical foundations underpinning the contemplated conceptual framework and research hypotheses.

Chapter five highlights the methodology adopted in gathering data for hypotheses' testing purposes. The content of this chapter involved identifying the appropriate research paradigm and design, the mode and procedures employed in data collection, sampling procedures, data analysis techniques, and the research's ethical considerations.

Chapter six is concerned with the procedures of analysing the data, testing hypotheses, and presenting the overall results. This chapter commences with providing an overview of the



collected responses, followed by the procedures of data screening and preparation (normality assessment, outliers detection, and missing data handling), and descriptive statistics on the questionnaires' items and the sample's demographic profile. Afterwards, it examines the reliability of the constructs and validity of the measurement model using confirmatory factor analysis (CFA). Following this, it assesses the potential existence of the CMB using two statistical techniques, namely the Harman single-factor test and the common latent variable. The final section examines the overall fit of the hypothesised model using structural equation modelling (SEM) and presents the findings of the hypothesised relationships.

Lastly, chapter seven discusses the overall key results of the study. Additionally, this chapter explains the main theoretical contributions and practical implications. Also, the present study's limitations and future research directions are provided at the end of this chapter.

## Chapter Two: Literature Review

### 2.1. Introduction

The current study revolves around the examination of two antecedents (ID and adjustment), one moderator (CC-PsyCap), and three consequences (knowledge sharing willingness, current assignment renewal intention, and performance) of the relationship between expatriate's job deprivation regarding the three instinct needs (relatedness, competence, and autonomy) and thriving at workplace in the subsidiaries of foreign organisations operating in Egypt as a host country. Therefore, this chapter endeavours to conduct a tour of a review of the current literature, either theoretical or empirical, related to the previous main constructs<sup>3</sup>. This chapter commences by discussing the different concepts of distance and the peculiarity of ID in capturing and examining cultural differences compared to other similar constructs in the IB studies, and reviews previous studies addressing the outcomes of ID. Then, it discusses the concept of expatriate adjustment, its theoretical approaches, and prior research on its outcomes. Afterwards, it discusses the two RDT and SDT that underpin the concept of job deprivation, and then, reviews prior research on them. This is followed by discussing the concept of thriving and its theoretical model and presenting prior studies on the predictors and outcomes of thriving at workplace. Afterwards, the review is shifted to the concept of CC-PsyCap, its theoretical approach, and the previous studies concerning its antecedent and outcomes. Finally, it reviews the literature related to the three criteria of expatriates' success, encompassing knowledge

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<sup>3</sup> For the purpose of searching articles addressing the main concepts of this study, two steps were employed following IB scholars (see Cooke, Veen, and Wood; Cooke Wood, Wang, and Veen, 2019). For more details on the method of review, please see Appendix (A)

sharing willingness, current assignment renewal intention, and performance as potential outcomes of thriving. This chapter concludes with providing generic reflections and analysis of the literature for research gap identification purposes.

## 2.2. The Concept of Distance in IB

Distance, as a concept, has been given considerable attention and paramount importance in the IB research stream (Zaheer, 2012). Ghemawat (2001) articulates that distance may stem from differences in economic, geographic, administrative, and cultural domains. In the most recent systematic review to depict an overarching view around the conceptualisation of distance, Hutzschenreuter et al. (2016) allude to five dimensions of distance that are summarised in the following table:

Table 2.1: Distinction between Different Types of Distance

Types of Distance	Definition	Sources
Cultural Distance (CD)	CD is commonly defined as the difference between the MNC's home country and the host one in terms of values and norms.	(Chang et al., 2012a)
Geographic Distance (GD)	GD is known in the international trade field as the barrier that increases communication and transportation costs, hinders personal communication and transportation, and flows of information and trade. However, these barriers have been vanished by the virtue of advancement in information technology.	(Hakanson and Ambos, 2010)
Economic Distance (ED)	ED is one of the institutional factors that influence the structure of society and differ across countries in different economic indicators <sup>4</sup> .	(Hakanson and Ambos, 2010)
Psychic Distance (PD)	"factors preventing or disturbing the flow of information between firms and markets" Such factors may include culture, language, level of education, religion, and political system.	(Johanson and Wiedersheim-Paul, 1975, p.308; Dow and Karunaratn, 2006;

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<sup>4</sup> Several indicators have been used by researchers to capture economic distance, such as per-capita GDP differences (Malhotra et al., 2009), inflow and outflow FDI stock, and the "United Nation Human Development Index" (Brewer, 2007).

		Avloniti and Filippaios, 2014 Hutzschenreuter et al., 2016)
Institutional Distance (ID)	the disparity between two countries regarding cultural-cognitive, normative, and regulatory dimensions.	Kostova and Zaheer (1999)

Among these 5 kinds of distance, both ID and CD gained wide popularity and application in the IB field. However, the present study focuses on ID because this concept is more comprehensive, not only capturing the cultural dimensions but also including the regulatory dimension. Furthermore, recent research highlights that ID matters because countries differ in their formal and informal institutions that affect the modes of getting functions conducted based on legitimacy. Thus, when conducting business abroad, MNCs should learn new ways of conducting their operations and satisfy different, numerous, and contradictory expectations, requirements, and legitimacy (Kostova et al., 2020). Additionally, ID has been operationalised at the individual level (see Ramsey, 2013), relative to CD that has been mainly operationalised at the country based on Kogut and Singh's (1988) index<sup>5</sup>. The latter limited the explanations of individual-level outcomes (Ramsey, 2013) that individuals (e.g., expatriates) might encounter on their international assignments. Finally, ID has been coined and operationalised based on a well-established theory in the IB field, namely the institutional theory that provided better comprehension of individuals' perceptions when working in the international setting (Ramsey, 2005).

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<sup>5</sup> Drawing on the four cultural dimensions developed by Hofstede (1980), namely uncertainty avoidance, power distance, individualism/collectivism, and masculinity/femininity, Kogut and Singh (1988) developed an index to measure cultural distance between parent companies and their foreign affiliates. Although this index is characterised by the simplicity and easiness of the application (Avloniti and Filippaios, 2014) and effectiveness in dealing with the Common Method Bias problem (Morosini et al., 1998), it has undergone some criticisms (for more details on these criticisms, see Shenkar, 2001).

Both the institutional theory and the concept of ID are discussed in the following subsections.

### **2.2.1. A Theoretical Background of Institutional Theory**

The strategic decision of overseas markets entry has exacerbated a potent debate among scholars in the IB literature with respect to how firms should decide the appropriate entry mode (Brouthers and Brouthers, 2000). When it comes to foreign investment and operations, two key decisions do matter for MNCs: entry mode (green-field investment vs acquisition) and level of ownership decisions (wholly-owned subsidiary vs joint venture) (Gaur and Lu, 2007). Predominantly, some scholars, for example, Cho and Padmanabhan (1995) and Hennart and Park (1993) capitalised on the pivotal role of the transaction cost theory in explaining companies' choices to adopt either "green-field start-up" or acquisitions (Brouthers and Brouthers, 2000). However, other researchers detracted the previous theory for overlooking the institutional and cultural contexts' impact (Kogut and Singh, 1988). Thus, the majority of research streams have been shifted to address the MNCs' decisions and performance from the institutional theory perspective.

According to the institutional theory, organisations are largely influenced by different institutions that are embedded in social structures, which may significantly affect corporations' decision-making (Campbell, 2007; Aguilera-Caracuel et al., 2013). Given the diversity of regions and countries where MNCs conduct their business operations, they have to encounter the challenging decision of whether to embrace homogeneous practices and approaches (Kostova and Roth, 2002). From an institution-based view, companies' both internal and external environment may trigger "isomorphic pressures", which as a consequence, shape their organisational structure (DiMaggio and Powell, 1983; Scott, 2014). Putting it in another way, legitimacy is the focal assumption of institutional theory, which is more likely to be achieved

if corporations espouse structures and practices similar to those of others (Yiu and Makino, 2002). In uncertain institutional environments, imitation strategy is often preferred by MNCs to adhere to institutional pressures and to demonstrate their legitimacy to legitimating actors (Chan and Makino, 2007). Although there is a conflicting quest on MNCs to establish and maintain both external and internal legitimacy, the former is conceived to have a stronger impact on MNCs compared to the latter (Xu, Pan, and Beamish, 2004).

North (1990, p.3) defines institutions as “the rules of the game in a society, or more formally, are the humanly devised constraints that shape human interactions.” Institutions can be both formal (e.g., laws and regulations created by the local government) and informal (e.g., social values, beliefs, and norms) (Rottig, 2016). Other scholars, such as Scott (2014, p.56) conceptualised institutions as a multifaceted construct, comprising “regulative, normative, and cultural-cognitive elements that, together with associated activities and resources, provide stability and meaning to social life.” In this typology, the regulative aspect denoted the extant rules and laws that govern, constrain, and control behaviours within a specific country (Phillips et al., 2009). This pillar relies on the capability of establishing, surveilling, and enforcing rules, as well as, supporting legal sanctions (Xu and Shenkar, 2002). Conformity/non-conformity to rules provokes feelings of innocence/guilt (Scott, 2014). The normative pillar is composed of norms, values, and beliefs that identify the legitimate actions in a society (Phillips et al., 2009). It is highlighted that normative systems determine the objectives and specify the ways to accomplish them, and they provide a guide for social actors on how to behave appropriately. Such a normative institution is closely associated with sociologists who are prone to examine social classes, kinship networks, and communities where shared values and beliefs may prevail. Like regulative systems, violation of or compliance with norms may create the sense of shame

or self-respect, respectively. (Scott, 2014). The third pillar (i.e., cultural-cognitive) signifies the shared knowledge in a social setting (Phillips et al., 2009). This component stresses the importance of symbols (e.g., gestures, signs, and words) in explaining social actors' actions and behaviours. This, in turn, stipulates that the external cultural setting shapes individuals' internal processes of understanding social reality and interpreting others' actions (Scott, 2014).

The formal institutions are compatible with the regulatory aspect in Scott's (2014) classification. Some scholars do consider informal institutions as cultural ones. Overtly, Jensen and Szulanski (2004, p.513) state that "cultural distance captures the cognitive and normative institutions." Therefore, the national culture is reflected in the informal institutions (Hanges and Dickson, 2006) that are more tacit in nature and deeply embedded in the structure of a given society. Thus, foreigners may experience difficulty in understanding and interpreting these institutions (Aguilera-Caracuel et al., 2013). Similarly, based on the conventions of neo-institutional theory, the attainment of legitimacy in the informal domain is of great importance for MNCs' subsidiaries and such legitimacy can be achieved by employing an "isomorphism" mechanism in each country where they conduct foreign investment (Kostova and Zaheer, 1999). This entails the foreign subsidiaries of MNCs' to assimilate the same practices adopted by local partners in the host countries (DiMaggio and Powell, 1983). Unlike legitimacy in the formal aspect, it evidently appears to be very challenging for foreign affiliates to attain informal legitimacy (Kostova and Zaheer, 1999).

Although institutions are created to minimise uncertainty by maintaining order and stability in societies, this does not imply that they are static (North, 1990). Scott (2008) argues that institutions are subject to change due to interior (e.g., inconsistency existing between poor and expected performance) and exterior (e.g., political and economic disruptions flaw the current

rules) reasons. Despite the collaborative contribution of these three elements in supporting and sustaining institutional social order, they display significant variations in the “type of institutional order, bases of order, motives of compliance, logic of action, and rationale for claiming legitimacy” (Scott, 2008, p.249). These three pillars constituted the cornerstone upon which Kostova (1997) drew to develop the concept of ID that is elaborated and distinguished from other similar constructs in the following subsection.

### **2.2.2. The Concept of ID**

ID is embedded in the institutional theory (Scott, 2014). Kostova and Zaheer (1999, p.71) refer to institutional distance as “the difference/similarity between the regulatory, normative, and cognitive institutions of the two countries.” The authors proposed that it would be very difficult for MNCs to establish and maintain legitimacy in the host country that was institutionally distant from the home one with respect to these three dimensions. However, external legitimacy is more important for MNCs’ survival and continuity (Xu et al., 2004; Hernandez and Nieto, 2015). External legitimacy can be established when MNCs show that their foreign affiliates act according to the legal requirement set by the legitimating actors (Chan and Makino, 2007). For instance, foreign companies may need to adjust their practices in accordance with the legal rules in the host country (e.g., “Chinese firms’ compliance with product safety regulations in the US”) (Liou et al., 2016). High ID increases transaction costs and liability of foreignness for MNCs operating in foreign markets, and thus, it represents a competitive disadvantage (Shirodkar and Konara, 2016; Liou et al., 2016; Salomon and Wu, 2012). Additionally, high ID impedes foreign companies to establish and maintain good relationships with local partners in the host country. Conversely, low ID significantly buffers the previous challenges (Contractor et al., 2014).



Notwithstanding, in their critique of the neo-institutional theory, Kostova et al. (2008) challenge some of the previous arguments. The authors, in particular, provoke that “isomorphism” is institutionally limited within MNCs and is not necessarily required for legitimacy. They claim that MNCs belong to a special kind of organisations that provides distinct things to the local host environment, and such things are highly valued and appreciated by indigenous local partners. Thus, there are few expectations to adopt the existing local practices. Compliance is only expected for the formal/regulatory component by the virtue of coercive power and sanction, but normative and cognitive compliance may be little enforced. Additionally, the institutional environment of the host countries may lack the adequate capacity to provide and control the rare resources compared to the MNCs that have several alternatives. Moreover, MNCs are characterised by institutional enrichment because of their heavy exposure to numerous practices and activities. In other words, foreign subsidiaries are less dependent on the external environment than their parent companies for critical resources. Thus, they possess the privilege of discretion to select the best-fit patterns and practices, such that, to some extent, they are free to decide whether to adopt the local practices or to benchmark other institutional practices. In this essence, isomorphism may exist but as a result of the MNCs’ choices instead of adhering to isomorphism pressures exerted by the external environment.

Despite the previous criticisms, the construct of ID developed by Kostova and Zaheer (1999) has gained broad popularity in the IB literature due to its significant impact on some firm-related issues/decisions, most of which are discussed in the following subsection.

### **2.2.3. Outcomes of ID**

The majority of research has been extensively hilted toward addressing the predictive impact of ID on several outcomes. Based on a review of (47) articles published in highly ranked journals in the field of IB, the outcomes of ID can be categorised into four common themes:

#### **2.2.3.1. ID and Entry Mode Choice**

The impact of ID on entry mode strategies has been well-documented from both institutional theory and transaction cost theory. The former emphasises legitimacy, whereas the latter focuses on efficiency criteria (Hernandez and Nieto, 2015). In their theoretical work, Xu and Shenkar (2002) propose that ID influences entry, ownership, and control strategies. In this regard, they developed three propositions. First, acquisition is more likely to be pursued when cognitive and normative distances are low, and when the distance of both dimensions is high, the green-field investment may be more preferable. Second, majority joint venture or wholly-owned subsidiaries are more preferable to enter foreign markets where regulative distance is low, whilst minority joint ventures are highly adoptable when regulative distance is high. Third, only normative distance does matter regarding the level of control, such that the higher the normative distance, the lower the equity control pursued by MNCs and vice versa. Later, these propositions have been empirically tested in a vast amount of studies.

This stream of research almost coincided that ID had a powerful influence on MNCs' decisions associated with selecting the appropriate mode for entering foreign markets. For instance, Yiu and Makino (2002) demonstrated that the larger the distance of regulatory and normative institutions between home and host countries, the more likely joint venture outweighs wholly-owned subsidiary choice. When it comes to a large cognitive distance, MNCs may mimic the

entry approach adopted by the leaders of their home country in the host country. Furthermore, Arslan and Lamiro (2011) unveiled that high informal ID was significantly associated with greenfield investments, whilst high formal ID was significantly related to acquisition choice. Other accounts showed that the stronger and the more supportive the institutional context of the host country, wholly-owned choice and (green field or acquisition) were more likely to be selected by foreign investors when entering transition economies and (emerging markets) (Meyer, 2001; Meyer et al., 2009). Moreover, Brouthers and Brouthers (2000) suggested that some institutional variables (e.g., size of the investment, technological intensity, and experience) were antecedents of companies' choices between green-field start-ups and acquisitions when they expanded internationally. Some commentators focused on certain types of formal institutions, such as political constraints and corruption between home and host countries. When the difference was high, foreign investors were more likely to select joint ventures over wholly-owned subsidiaries (Demirbag et al., 2010).

Although ID is a multi-faceted construct, comprising the three aforementioned pillars, some studies focused primarily on specific sub-dimensions. Hernandez and Nieto (2015), for example, investigate the direction and magnitude of regulatory distance between the host destination and the home country on firms' entry decisions. They postulated that regulative distance may have both negative and positive directions. The former occurs when MNCs from well-established institutional (regulatory) environments enter foreign markets with a weak regulatory setting, and they may face the complex hurdle in gaining legitimacy. In such cases, MNCs tend to enter markets with low resource commitments. By contrast, the latter takes place when MNCs from a weak institutional regulatory context opt to enter a more developed destination, and they may find it very easy to gain external legitimacy because the "rules of the

game” are more clearly established compared to their original destination. In these circumstances, MNCs are more prone to select alternatives with higher resource commitment. Thus, the direction of distance is of great importance to be considered in entry modes.

However, another strand of research was more eclectic in focusing on some aspects of formal regulatory and informal cultural environments, such as political risk and governance quality in the host country. Lopez-Duarte and Vidal-Suarez (2010) found that external uncertainty emerging from political risk and cultural distance and the interaction between both of them had a significant effect on entry modes. That is, more preference was given to joint ventures over wholly-owned subsidiaries when the interaction is high, under the condition of language barriers absence between partners.

On the contrary, Slangen and Tulder (2009, p.207) challenged the previous notion by reflecting that cultural distance and political risk are imperfect proxies to capture external uncertainty and suboptimal antecedents of entry mode selection. The reasons underlying their assumptions are that “CD not only reflect the external uncertainty associated with wholly-owned subsidiary but also the internal uncertainty associated with joint ventures” and that “political risk only covers one aspect of the country’s formal institutional environment.” The authors, therefore, focused on the overall governance quality construct that encompassed: “voice and accountability, political stability, government’s effectiveness, regulatory quality, rule of law, and control of corruption.” Out of these 6 dimensions, political risk was found to have the weakest effect compared to the other dimensions on entry modes, and that MNCs were more inclined to enter foreign markets with low governance quality via joint ventures to minimise external uncertainty. Also, CD had no significant influence on entry modes.

Nonetheless, it is worth noting that when the governance quality of the host country acts as a moderator, the results may be quite divergent. For example, Chang et al. (2012a) unfolded that wholly-owned subsidiaries were more preferred over joint ventures when MNCs entered culturally distant host countries characterised by poor governance. This could be explained by the high contacting costs and high risk of collaboration with local partners. Conversely, they also found that joint ventures were more likely to be selected when MNCs entered culturally distant markets characterised by good governance. More importantly, the previous scholars found a consistency in the contingent role of each of the sub-dimensions separately and the overall composite construct.

### **2.2.3.2. ID and Ownership Structure**

There exists a growing body of literature that examined the role of ID on MNCs' ownership strategies. For example, Liou et al. (2016) investigated the impact of formal and informal ID on the ownership strategies of emerging MNCs in nine emerging economies. The results demonstrated that high formal ID between the home countries of emerging MNCs and their targeted destination would propel them to gain a higher level of ownership (full acquisition). Whilst, high informal ID led MNCs to gain lower ownership in cross-border mergers and acquisitions (M&As) (sharing ownership with local constituents). Surprisingly, their study focused on regulatory institutional quality by looking at the other side of the coin (home country), and they found that inferior/bad regulatory institutional quality negatively (positively) impacted the relationship between informal (formal) ID and ownership strategy.

Another study conducted by Powel and Rhee (2016) highlights that high regulatory ID minimises the MNCs' preference for majority-owned structures but such a negative relationship is lessened when MNCs possess a great diversified experience with regulatory

distance among its operations. Furthermore, Xu et al. (2004) conclude that when distance regarding both regulative and normative dimensions increased, MNCs are more prone to obtain lower equity. Interestingly, they link both categories of distance to MNCs' expatriate staffing strategies, and they stipulate that MNCs tend to send few expatriates on international assignments in the foreign affiliates and capitalise intensively on local managers and workforce because they are already aware of local institutions, thereby minimising legitimacy threats. Some scholars shed a spotlight on some institutional variables, such as political constraints, corruption, cultural, and linguistic distance, and they confirm that these factors are determinants of ownership structure choice by MNCs. More particularly, the larger the political, corruption, cultural, and linguistic distance, the more likely MNCs are to choose joint venture or lower equity mode over wholly-owned subsidiary (Demirbag et al., 2007). Similarly, other commentators support that political instability in the host country is inversely related to MNCs' ownership stake in foreign subsidiaries (Chan and Makino, 2007).

In a similar vein, it is suggested that Japanese companies often prefer to possess a lower equity structure when entering foreign markets with high institutional distances. However, this orientation may diverge when Japanese companies have both the great host country and international experience (Ando, 2012). In the M&As context, Contractor et al. (2014) partially support that the greater the ID between the acquirer and the target firm, the likelihood of full acquisition or majority acquisition increases in emerging markets.

### **2.2.3.3. ID and Performance**

This strand of research has linked the impact of ID to foreign affiliates' overall or certain types of performance. For instance, Gaur and Lu (2007) outlined that regulatory and normative distances significantly affected the survival opportunities of foreign affiliates. A more recent study replicated the previous authors' study and re-examined the effect of ID on subsidiaries' performance in emerging markets (Shirodkar and Konanva, 2016). The results found that ID was a negative significant predictor of subsidiaries' performance, and this negative influence was contingent on the high level of host country experience. In the same sense, Liou and Rao-Nicholson (2017) supported the adverse effect of political and economic institutional distance on post-acquisition performance for South African subsidiaries operating in developed countries.

Moreover, it is claimed that the greater the institutional distance between the home and host country, the less the returns that can be achieved by the foreign affiliates compared to their local counterparts (Higon and Antolin, 2012). Additionally, the effectiveness of knowledge transfer within MNCs is significantly affected by cultural distance (Ambos and Ambos, 2009). Evidence showed that high regulatory and normative distance negatively influenced the relationship between international diversity and performance within MNCs (Chao and Kumar, 2010). Finally, Aguilera-Caracuel et al. (2013) explicated that MNCs experienced different levels of environmental performance when the formal environmental distance increased between home and host countries based on the legal regulations of each host country. Additionally, MNCs tended to customise their environmental performance separately according to each country where foreign units were located. Recent research also found that

the relationship between informal ID and financial performance had a sigmoid (S) shape<sup>6</sup>, whereas formal ID had a negative significant effect on the financial performance of cross-border alliances (Golesorkhi et al., 2019).

Furthermore, Bauer et al. (2018) confirmed the contingent/moderating role of some formal institutions (e.g., labour market efficiency and flexibility) in the relationship between functional and human integration and acquisitions' performance. Lazarova et al. (2018) found ID to interact with the subsidiaries' HR autonomy in predicting performance, such that the positive relationship was stronger when the ID between home and host countries was low. Finally, Sartor and Beamish (2014) examined three types of the informal ID<sup>7</sup>, which varied in their effect on the organisational control of subsidiaries, such that the higher the behavioural distance, the stronger the preference for tighter organisational control, whereas the greater the technological and demand distance, the lower the inclination toward organisational control.

#### **2.2.3.4. ID and Managerial Practices Transfer**

Kostova (1999) proposed that ID and strategic organisational practices transfer were negatively associated. Moreover, the level of adoption and internalisation of organisational practices in the foreign affiliates was dependent on the host country's institutional profile of regulative, normative, and cognitive aspects (Kostova and Roth, 2002). A bundle of research has given attention to the association between ID and HRM practices. For example, Clark and Lengnick-

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<sup>6</sup> This S-shape is featured by an initial increase, followed by a decline, and then, an increase again in performance.

<sup>7</sup> The authors explained the informal ID in terms of two generic types of uncertainty: environmental and behavioural. The former type deals with the inability to anticipate the external environment of the organisation regarding, and this type covers both technological uncertainty ("the inability to fully comprehend aspects of the technological environment") and demand uncertainty ("the inability to forecast the amount and type of outputs that will be required in the marketplace"). The latter type contends with the uncertainty associated with "a transaction partner's behaviour" (Sartor and Beamish, 2014, p.1076).



Hall (2012) explored how the configurations and transfer of the HR practices from parent companies to foreign affiliates in the host country were influenced by ID. Departing from the dominant emphasis on ID as an obstacle, they proposed that ID might act as a source of strategic opportunity for foreign subsidiaries to achieve a competitive advantage, pending a moderate distance between the home and host countries. Further support was provided by Gamble (2003, p.384), who indicated that informal (cultural) distance should not be regarded as an insurmountable impediment confronting HRM practices transfer. The contemplation of culture as static is an exaggerated assumption but it should be considered as “a shifting and changeable repertoire with diverse strand.”

A recent qualitative study explored the impact of the home country’s institutional context on the IHRM practices choices in foreign affiliates. Haak-Saheem et al. (2017) indicated that Emirates-based MNCs espoused distinctive HRM practices in the foreign subsidiaries. This variety of approaches was contingent on the location of the subsidiaries. Taking it another way, when the foreign subsidiaries operate in developing countries, the HRM practices seem to be slightly standardised. Whilst, operating in developed countries entails adjusting/aligning these practices, following the host country’s institutional context. This reflects the fact that similar institutional contexts enhance the standardisation of practices and vice versa.

Research also suggests that cultural difference is not the only determinant of HRM practices across nations. Chow (2004), for example, provide evidence for the previous claim by explaining that some similarities may exist in the HRM practices in China, Hong Kong, and Taiwan due to the existence of some common cultural values. However, some significant differences do appear, which are explainable by the institutional differences between them. It

is also found that the effectiveness of the HRM practices relies on the degree of congruence of these practices with the institutional environment.

In the less-developed Ghana context, MNCs' subsidiaries from developed countries tend to exhibit some degree of convergence in their HRM practices. However, what is surprising is that the HRM practices implemented in the foreign subsidiaries operating in Ghana assimilate those of the parent companies. This implies that this convergence is not extremely driven by the impact of the host country but rather the influence of the home country, global integration benefits, and competitive isomorphism (Ayentimi et al., 2018). Additionally, it seems that ID is not a major constraint for transferring HR practices, especially from developed to developing countries.

Another evidence from the European context suggests that MNCs' subsidiaries operating in the German fast food industry may not face challenges in the transferability of their managerial processes across borders and that they may impose their employment system with few considerations for the institutional context of Germany (Royle, 2002). This may be attributed to the fact that these MNCs' affiliates operate in a low institutional distant market.

#### **2.2.3.5. ID and Expatriates' Outcomes and Staffing Decisions**

In the expatriation context, surprisingly, Ramsey (2005) developed a conceptual framework, in which she proposed that ID between the home and host countries might negatively influence the three facets of expatriates' adjustment, including work, interaction, and general adjustment. However, this model still needs empirical investigation. In a later study, Ramsey (2013) conducted a three-study paper to develop a valid measurement for ID on the individual level due to the concerns elevated about the ID measurement. She also found that ID was a

significant positive predictor of job strain. Other researchers acknowledged that expatriates' cultural competence was predicted by their personalities (conscientiousness and openness). Such a relationship was found to be restricted by the institutional distance between home and host countries (Wang et al., 2013).

Additionally, ID was linked to expatriate staffing in the foreign subsidiaries. According to Ando and Paik (2013), the larger the ID, the lower the ratio of expatriates to subsidiaries' local employees, and the larger the absolute number of expatriates assigned to the subsidiary. Their study found that even if MNCs had extensive overseas experience, they were inclined to expatriate staffing to overcome the increase in ID. Some scholars addressed the moderating effect of ID on the relationship between localisation and the performance of Japanese subsidiaries. For instance, Ando (2014) argues that when the host country's nationals supersede expatriates, subsidiaries' performance may be enhanced by the virtue that locals are more aware of the institutional context of the host country and their local experience and knowledge will enable these subsidiaries to navigate the legitimacy challenge. However, this positive privilege of enhanced legitimacy may be negatively moderated by high ID, and in such a case, additional knowledge transfer and control are more required.

Recent research exacerbated the issue of "expatriates' safety and security" practices on their international assignments taking place in hostile or uncertain environments. It is proposed that the institutional context of the host country is contemplated to be uncertain or hostile when it suffers from a lack of formal institutions (e.g., political stability) and informal institutions (e.g., security and safety). This negative perception adversely affects expatriates, leading to their vulnerability to three kinds of threats, known as "infrastructure dependent, legitimacy dependent, and knowledge dependent." In this essence, organisations should take actions to

ensure their safety and eliminate the ambiguity emanating from the weak institutional context of the host country, and this could be achieved by “investing in highly customised and information-intensive HR practices” (i.e., share information with local constituents, develop specific security plans, and seek massive amounts of knowledge domestically) (Fee et al., 2017, p.19).

#### **2.2.3.6. Miscellaneous Outcomes of ID**

This section displays some different studies that examine the effect of ID on some miscellaneous unclassified outcomes. For instance, it is highlighted that the different dimensions (regulatory, normative, and cognitive) of ID can vary in terms of their impact on the internationalisation processes among mobile operators in South America and Europe (Pogrebnyakov and Maitland, 2011). Although myriad research bolstered the negative influence of ID, other accounts, interestingly, found a positive effect of ID on the “local isomorphism strategy.” More specifically, the foreign subsidiaries are expected to highly embrace a “local isomorphism strategy” when institutional distance increases (Saloman and Wu, 2012).

Recent research unveiled that both formal and informal ID influenced the MNCs’ decisions regarding the selection of the foreign subsidiary’s location (i.e., the larger the ID, the less attractive the foreign location) (Romero-Martínez et al., 2019). More recently, Nagaraj and Chao (2021) found that the regulatory ID negatively impacted the MNCs’ decisions regarding the probability and amount of investments in research and development.

The next section reviews the literature on the concept of expatriate adjustment.

### **2.3. The Concept of Adjustment**

Over the last four decades, expatriates' adjustment has been frequently examined in a vast amount of research as a significant indicator/criterion of international assignment success (Black, 1988; Black, Mendenhall, and Oddou, 1991; Caliguiri, 1997; Harrison and Shaffer, 2005; Kraimer and Wayne, 2004; Shaffer et al., 2006). This is because expatriates' maladjustment to the foreign country is conceived as a major reason for assignment failure (Tung, 1981). As a concept, adjustment has been used interchangeably with some other synonyms in the expatriation literature, such as adaptation and acculturation (Harrison, Shaffer, and Bhaskar-Shrinivas, 2004; Shi and Franklin, 2014), and it is worth differentiating between the former and the two latter terms for better understanding. Acculturation is a comprehensive and broad concept referring to the ongoing process by which expatriates undergo some changes in their cognitions, emotions, and behaviours when frequently interacting with individuals from different cultures. It is a two-way process affecting both the host country's nationals and expatriates (Harrison et al., 2004).

Meanwhile, adaptation is defined as a one-way process requiring individuals to change their behaviours to accomplish congruence with the host environment. Although both adaptation and acculturation share some commonalities in terms of making differentiation between the temporariness and permanence of the relocation, the latter is viewed as a long-term process than the former. By contrast, adjustment is a more specific and narrower construct attached with variability in definitions in terms of being "a state or a process" (Harrison et al., 2004). Both perspectives are elaborated below

### **2.3.1. “Adjustment as a Process”**

Earlier scholars describe adjustment as a transitional process whereby adjustment occurs when expatriates either alter the new work role to correspond to their work roles or alter their attitudes and behaviours to achieve congruence with their work roles (Nicholson, 1984). More specifically, Nicholson (1984) proposed four stages of adjustment: (1) replication (low changes in work role and attitudes/behaviours); (2) absorption (low changes in the work role and high changes in attitudes/behaviours); (3) determination (high alterations in the work role and low alterations in attitudes/behaviours); and (4) exploration (high alterations in both the work role and attitudes/behaviours). Accordingly, successful experience of adjustment is manifested in exploration and absorption, and unsuccessful experience of adjustment is demonstrated in the determination and replication modes because expatriates strongly espouse their former indigenous behaviours relative to the host country. However, this conceptualisation received minimal application in the expatriation literature.

In earlier sojourner literature, Lysgaard (1955) proposed that adjustment is a sequential process that unfolds over time “U-Curve). In this multistage model, expatriates undergo four stages of adjustment: (1) honeymoon (expatriates are fascinated with the new culture); (2) culture shock (expatriates demonstrate poor functioning and are more likely to withdraw); (3) adjustment (expatriates perceive less stress and start to function appropriately); and (4) mastery (expatriates function effectively in the new culture and feel highly satisfied). This model insinuates that the adjustment-time on assignment relationship is curvilinear. However, the majority of research focused on the linear relationship, holding the assumption that adjustment increases as time goes (Hippler, 2014). In addition, less empirical attention is devoted to this

“U-Curve” model, imputing this to the difficulty of designing longitudinal studies to monitor expatriates over time (Harrison et al., 2004).

### **2.3.2. “Adjustment as a State” and its Dimensionality and Operationality**

Some early scholarly work cast adjustment in terms of how sojourners transcend culture shock that is typically associated with negative feelings of loneliness, irritability, frustration, helplessness, and anxiety (Oberg, 1960; Church, 1982). Subsequently, in the expatriation realm, Black (1990) defines adjustment as “the degree of psychological comfort and familiarity of an individual with the new culture and situation” (Black, 1990, p.123). In their seminal taxonomy of adjustment, Black and Stephens (1989) identify three facets of adjustment that are inevitably encountered by expatriates in the novel environment: (1) general/cultural adjustment that deals with expatriates’ psychological comfort with their daily life conditions in terms of entertainment, accommodation, food, cloths, etc; (2) work adjustment that contends with expatriates’ psychological comfort with carrying out their job duties and responsibilities; and (3) interaction adjustment that focuses on expatriates’ psychological comfort with socialisations and interactions with local hosts (Black and Stephens, 1989). Among these three aspects, interaction adjustment is claimed to be the most important because both general and work adjustment heavily rely on how expatriates interact in the new setting (Harrison et al., 2004). Other associates stipulate that only two facets of adjustment (interaction and work) are more effective in capturing expatriates’ outcomes (Lee, 2010; Lee et al., 2013). Whereas, general/cultural adjustment has been frequently found to have a non-significant influence on outcomes in some expatriate studies (Kraimer et al., 2001; Wang and Takeuchi, 2007; Abdul Malek and Budhwar, 2013). Therefore, the present study will focus on the two effective dimensions of interaction and work adjustment. This tripartite typology has been

operationalised by Black and Stephens (1989), and empirically validated by Shaffer et al. (1999)<sup>8</sup>.

The acculturation literature led by the seminal work by Searle and Ward (1990) on cross-cultural adjustment of sojourners (Malaysian and Singaporean students) has identified two dimensions of adjustment: psychological and sociocultural. The first facet contends with psychological well-being and satisfaction, which captures the affective component of adjustment. Both stress and coping are suitable frameworks to better comprehend it (Ward and Kennedy, 1999). It reflects individuals' experience of anxiety or comfort and happiness with regard to the new cultural environment (Demes and Geeraert, 2014). The second facet is defined by Ward and Kennedy (1999, p.660) as "the ability to fit in, to acquire culturally appropriate skills and to negotiate interactive aspects of the host." It captures the behavioural aspect of the concept and can be better comprehended through the paradigm of social learning (Ward and Rana-Deuba, 1999). Even though both concepts are overlapped, they are still distinguishable. This is because sociocultural adjustment is influenced by cultural learning and social skills acquisition, whereas psychological adjustment is impacted by life changes, personality, social support, and coping styles. Therefore, it is suggested that separate measures should be used for the two concepts (Ward and Kennedy, 1996; Ward and Kennedy, 1999).

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<sup>8</sup> The overall scale is composed of 14-items, disentangled into three subscales, with 3-items, 4-items, and 7-items for work, interaction, and general adjustment, respectively. The psychometric features of the scale ranged from 0.82-0.93, 0.69-0.93, and 0.73-0.95 for interaction, work, and general/cultural adjustment, with somewhat variations across studies. Nonetheless, it included some limitations. First, the existence of verbal redundancy in the work and interaction categories. Second, the items in the interaction and work subscales are incommensurate relative to the general/cultural scale (Harrison et al., 2004; Thomas and Lazarova, 2012). Third, the instrument entirely focused on the behavioural aspect of adjustment and did not consider the cognitive and affective aspects (Hippler, 2000).



Although the conceptualisation of adjustment by Ward and colleagues had potent theoretical grounds relative to Black and associates' one, it received less popularity among expatriate scholars as well as confronted some criticism (Thomas and Lazarova, 2012). First, the conceptualisation of the sociocultural aspect is argued to have a pitfall because it focuses on effectiveness achievement in terms of the interactional process with host nationals, thereby "incorporating the effect or consequence of a construct as part of the construct itself" (Harrison et al., 2004, p.211). Second, Ward and colleagues did not develop an overarching model of adjustment and their previous examination of the two dimensions' predictors are partially and empirically driven. Third, some operationalisation issues have also been reported in the measurement scale, which include: (1) psychological adjustment is measured drawing on the depression inventory that is not totally congruent with other psychological adjustment measures (see Oguri and Gudykunst, 2002); (2) some few studies reported the psychometric features of the sociocultural adjustment scale, showing inadequate clarity related to what the scale actually measures, a lack of measure validation, and scale dimensionality inconclusiveness<sup>9</sup>; (3) their scale is adjustable based on the features of the samples, thereby raising an issue regarding results' comparison across studies (Thomas and Lazarova, 2012); and (4) the entire scale for both dimensions suffers from longevity.

Some scholars drew on the literature of Person-Environment (P-E) fit theory (Dawis and Lofquist, 1984, Caplan, 1983, French, Rodgers, Cobb, 1974) to conceptualise adjustment as

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<sup>9</sup> This inconclusiveness is manifested in two studies, one with overall 35 items (16 for sociocultural and 19 for psychological) (Searle and Ward, 1990) and the other with overall 43-items (23 for sociocultural and 20 for psychological) (Ward and Rana-Deuba, 1999). However, the scale reliability has been confirmed, with alpha coefficient ranging from 0.77-0.79 and consistent 0.81 for psychological and sociocultural, respectively (see Searle and Ward, 1990; Rana-Deuba, 1999).

the degree of fit between expatriates and their host environment regarding three dimensions: affective, cognitive and behavioural (Haslberger, Brewster, and Hippler, 2013). Based on this conceptualisation of adjustment, Hippler, Caligiuri, Johnson, and Baytalskaya (2014) developed a measurement scale of adjustment, comprising 35-items allocated among 10 subscales, involving “work environment, language, job characteristics, leisure time, urbanity, work-life balance, living quarter, family life, local friendships, contact with those left behind.”<sup>10</sup> The results provided evidence for the criterion validity of the scale, except for urbanity and language. It should be noted that this scale suffers from longevity in the items, similar to the case of Ward and associates’ scale.

Nonetheless, Black and Stephens’ (1989) taxonomy remains the most widely utilised instrument in expatriate research to understand the experience of adjustment in the new cultural setting until to date in high ranked journals (see Dimitrova, Chai, Shaffer, and Tay-Lee, 2020; Silbiger, Barnes, Berger, and Renwick, 2021; Haldorai, Kim, Seo, and Cai, 2021).

### **2.3.3. The Extant Theoretical Approaches of Expatriate Adjustment**

A review of the literature on expatriates’ adjustment alluded to the existence of three theoretical frameworks that have been utilised to understand the experience of adjustment, involving stress, social learning, and resource-based approaches. Each of these theoretical views is explained below:

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<sup>10</sup> The reliability of these subscales has been confirmed with alpha coefficient exceeded 0.70. In addition, the validity of this scale was assessed by examining the impact of the overall adjustment and its 10 subdimensions to some outcomes, such as general satisfaction, self-development, and self-rated performance.

### **2.3.3.1. Stress-Based Approach**

The majority of research on expatriates' adjustment is embedded in the stress and uncertainty literature because overseas relocation involves greater levels of disruptions and stress (Takeuchi, Yun, and Tesluk, 2002a; Park and Abbott, 2011). This widely pervasive approach has been dominated by the "stressor-stress-strain" framework (Harrison et al., 2004). Stressors are viewed as uncertainties that emanate from conflict between expatriates' resources and foreign environmental demands. Consequently, coping is a necessary mechanism to overcome these stressors (Folkman and Lazarus, 1988), which is defined as "efforts to manage environmental and internal demands, and conflicts among them, which tax or exceed a person's resources" (Lazarus and Launier, 1978, p.311). The literature highlights that there are two main coping strategies: problem-focused and emotion-focused. The former focuses on the person-environment rapport handling directly at the stress source. The latter is related to the person's ability to regulate his/her emotions emerging from stress (Stahl and Caligiuri, 2005). Research on both strategies demonstrated that problem-focused strategies had a significant positive influence on expatriates' effectiveness/adjustment, whereas emotion-focused strategies were found to inhibit expatriate effectiveness/adjustment (Feldman and Thomas, 1992; Tung, 1998; Selmer, 1999). Moreover, Stahl and Caligiuri (2005) found that coping strategies-adjustment linkage was moderated by cultural distance, with a strong relationship for problem-solving strategies in culturally distant countries.

However, stress is more likely to exist if expatriates do not succeed in adaptively coping with stressors. In other words, if expatriates are maladjusted to these stressors, they will experience stress. Following this, reactions to stress exist in the form of strains that encompass behavioural, cognitions, and affective outcomes, such as malfunctioning, early return,

withdrawal cognitions, and job dissatisfactions (Harrison et al., 2004; Bhaskar-Shrinivas et al., 2005).

Another theory that can be subsumed under the stress-based view is the anxiety/uncertainty management (AUM) theory (Gudykunst, 2005). His theory has been developed to ameliorate the quality of communications and adaptation to new cultures. The central argument of this theory is that when strangers are able to reduce their anxiety and uncertainty, they are more likely to communicate effectively with local hosts and adjust to the host cultural environment (Gudykunst, 1998)<sup>11</sup>.

### **2.3.3.2. Social Learning-Based Approach**

Some researchers drew on Bandura's (1977) social learning theory to understand the role of individual differences and organisational factors in affecting adjustment. This theory states that experience and observation influence learning. It is centrally premised on that individuals use symbols to expect actions and their related outcomes. Therefore, they can determine how to behave before the actual situation occurs. Additionally, individuals' learning from their behaviour's outcomes in a certain experience configures their future behaviours. For example, drawing on the social learning theory, Black et al. (1991) argue that high self-efficacious individuals are prone to display novel learned behaviours. Accordingly, they have more opportunities to receive positive and negative feedback that may be beneficial for reducing their uncertainty in terms of what is anticipated from them and how they function, thereby

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<sup>11</sup> The notion of creating this theory started with "Berger and Calabrese's (1975) uncertainty reduction theory (URT)" that was extended by Gudykunst (1985) to understand intercultural adjustment and intergroup and interpersonal communications (Gudykunst, 1998; P.227). It is alleged that anxiety and uncertainty reflect the affective and cognitive aspects of this theory, respectively (Gudykunst, 2005), and both are critical factors for comprehending effective communication and intercultural adjustment (Gudykunst, 1998).

correcting and modifying their behaviour to better fit in expectations. This, in turn, facilitates adjustment.

Other researchers utilised the social learning theory as a framework to illustrate the impact of cross-cultural training in reinforcing personal skills, which in turn, lead to adjustment facilitation (see Black and Mendenhall, 1990). Specifically, cross-cultural training provides individuals with visual or verbal models that configure their cognitive map regarding what appropriate behaviour should be displayed and what inappropriate behaviours should be suppressed, and the consequences of both scenarios. Accordingly, their cognitive map enhances their self-efficacy levels to act confidently and effectively in the cross-cultural domain (Black and Mendenhall, 1999). Shaffer et al. (1999) supported the necessity of predeparture training when both role and cultural novelty are high.

### **2.3.3.3. Resource-Based Approach**

Some few scholars attempted to understand adjustment from a resource-based perspective. Two key theories have been identified: the (P-E) fit theory and the job demands-resources (JD-R) model. The (P-E) fit theory is a framework that explains the interactive relationship between expatriates and their environment. Each party of this relationship should satisfy the requirements of the other to maintain interactions (Dawis and Lofquist, 1984). Two forms of fit have been distinguished in this platform: demands-ability fit and needs-supplies fit. The former denotes the environmental demands that an individual must meet. The latter focuses on meeting individuals' needs that largely hinge on environmental resources/supplies. Expatriates can determine whether their needs are satisfactorily met, and the environment determines whether its' demands are met (Caplan, 1983). The conceptualisation of adjustment has been situated in this theory as the degree of correspondence or fit between expatriates' personal

characteristics and the environment they deal with (French et al., 1974). Following the previous scholarly logic, Haslberger et al. (2013) define the concept of adjustment as the degree of fit between expatriates and their host environment along three dimensions: affective, cognitive, and behavioural. They further state that “each dimension is assessed against adequacy standards, some of which are externally by the environment and some are set internally by the expatriate” (Haslberger et al., 2013, p.338).

In addition, the JD-R model (Bakker and Demerouti, 2007) serves as a good resource-based lens to understand adjustment in the expatriation context. This model has been applied by Lazarova, Westman, and Shaffer (2010) to develop a model of the work-family interplay and set a set of propositions regarding the antecedents of expatriates’ performance by means of adjustment and engagement. They classify resources and demands into four categories of attributes, including family, work, personal, and general environment. They cast demands as attributes related to negative expatriate experiences and resources as attributes related to positive experiences. Accordingly, they argue that demands drain individuals’ energy, and lead to negative affect or strain. For expatriates, excessive demands are expected from family, work, and the general host environment domain, which may adversely influence expatriates’ and their spouses’ emotions. If expatriates do not have adequate personal resources to offset these demands, they and their spouses will experience difficulty in adjustment. Accordingly, they suggest the relationship between demands and adjustment to be negative, and the association between resources and adjustment to be positive and resources alleviate the negative impact of demands on adjustment.

Having discussed the theoretical approaches of adjustment, the next section reviews the previous empirical studies on expatriates’ adjustment. Although previous research has

identified numerous antecedents of adjustment, the present study's emphasis would be largely placed on reporting the outcomes of adjustment during assignments because it focused on examining job deprivation as an outcome of adjustment.

#### **2.3.4. Prior Studies on the Outcomes of Adjustment**

A vast number of articles emerged in the search results. The majority of research has been extensively hilted toward addressing the antecedents and consequences of expatriate adjustment. However, the focus will be on the studies that utilised the tripartite taxonomy of Black and colleagues for comparative purposes and the discussion of the previous studies' findings will focus on the outcomes of adjustment. Based on a review of (68) articles, the outcomes of expatriate adjustment can be categorised into four common themes:

##### **2.3.4.1. Adjustment and Expatriates' Attitudinal and Behavioural Outcomes**

Prior research has examined the influence of adjustment on some expatriates' distal job attitudinal and behavioural outcomes. For instance, some scholars found that work and general adjustment had a direct significant positive association with job satisfaction and non-job satisfaction, respectively (Shaffer and Harrison, 1998). Similarly, two meta-analytic studies supported the significant positive effect of adjustment on expatriates' job satisfaction (Hechanova et al., 2003; Bhaskar-Shrinivas et al., 2005). It was also found that adjustment mitigated job strain (Hechanova et al., 2003) but enhanced affective commitment (Gregersen and Black, 1992; Takeuchi, Wang, Marinova, and Yao, 2009) and life satisfaction in the host environment (Kim et al., 2016). Moreover, one distinctive longitudinal study unveiled that changes in work adjustment were positively associated with expatriates' satisfaction with the assignment (Firth et al., 2014). Contrary to the previous study's results, Pinto et al. (2012)

found that neither overall adjustment neither its three dimensions (general, work, and interaction) had a significant effect on assignment satisfaction.

Another line of inquiry placed emphasis on expatriates' behavioural intentions outcomes, particularly the intentions of assignment completion or termination, with the latter used in interchangeable terms, such as intention to return early, premature return intention, and withdrawal cognitions. For example, some researchers found that both work and general adjustments had a direct negative significant association with expatriates' intention to return early (Takeuchi, Yun, and Russell, 2002b; Takeuchi, Tesluk, Yun, and Lepak, 2005a). Other associates found the relationship between adjustment and withdrawal cognitions to be indirectly mediated by overall (job and general) satisfaction (Shaffer and Harrison, 1998). Similar findings have been reported by Takeuchi et al. (2002a), who found that general adjustment inhibited premature return via enhancing general satisfaction and that work adjustment also thwarted premature return via enhancing job satisfaction. Additionally, Firth et al. (2014) unfolded that expatriates who experienced positive changes in their work adjustment level were less likely to raise early indicators of returning to their homelands. In Pinto et al.'s (2012) study, withdrawal intentions have been classified into three types: occupational, organisational, and assignment withdrawals. The findings unravelled that work adjustment was significantly associated with assignment withdrawal, but neither with organisational nor occupational withdrawals. Moreover, neither interaction nor general adjustment predicted any of the three forms of withdrawals. Departing from the previous negative outlook, other associates outlined that adjustment had a positive significant association with expatriates' intention of assignment completion (Black and Stephens, 1989; Kraimer and Wayne, 2004; Wu and Ang, 2011). Other behavioural outcomes, such as



innovative work behaviour and knowledge transfer, have also been reported as positive significant outcomes of adjustment (Lee and Kartika, 2014).

Some studies have also linked adjustment with expatriates' career outcomes. For example, Zhu, Wanberg, Harrison, and Diehn (2016) conducted a longitudinal study to probe the effect of work adjustment trajectory on three career outcomes. Specifically, their findings provided strong support for the significant influence of work adjustment trajectory on career advancement (job upward movement or promotion), career instrumentality (perceptions of assignment as a valuable tool for the prestigious future job), and turnover (early return). Recent research has also found that well-adjusted expatriates are more satisfied with their careers (Dimitrova et al., 2020).

#### **2.3.4.2. Adjustment and Expatriates' Performance**

The expatriate adjustment-performance linkage has a long history of debate in the literature, showing to a greater extent contradictory perspectives. A review of the empirical literature revealed that the majority of studies have extensively focused on the self-report tripartite typology of adjustment by Black and Stephens (1989), comprising general/cultural, interaction, and work adjustment. Also, the key emphasis was on performance either measured in terms of task and contextual performance (separate scales or composite) or one unitary (overall) measure, with excessive domination by the self-rated compared to the other-rated.

According to Hippler (2014), it is argued that adjustment is not simply associated with performance, as one specific dimension of performance may be differentially impacted by adjustment facets. In support of his claim, self-rated performance was negatively impacted by general adjustment but positively influenced by work adjustment. The previous result was

plausibly interpreted as highly work committed expatriates had limited time for general conditions adjustment (Parker and McEvoy, 1993). Additionally, Caligiuri (1997) outlined that cultural adjustment was significantly related to self-rated assignment-specific, contextual/managerial, and overall dimensions of performance. Meanwhile, cultural adjustment was not significantly associated with any of the three facets of performance when rated by managers and co-workers. Although Caligiuri's (1997) measure of cultural adjustment assimilated the general adjustment measure employed by Kraimer et al. (2001), the results, conversely, revealed that general adjustment had no significant effect on both supervisor-rated task and contextual performance.

A substantial stream of research examined adjustment as a mediator between some antecedent variables and performance, while few ones studied it as a direct predictor. Both streams showed that overall adjustment or some of its facets significantly affected performance or some of its dimensions. The following generic results emerged:

1) work adjustment seemed to be a strong positive predictor of self-rated task performance (Shaffer et al., 2006 in study 2; Wu and Ang, 2011; Abdul Malek and Budhwar, 2013; Chew et al., 2019), the supervisor-rated task performance (Kraimer et al., 2001), self-rated assignment-specific performance (Setti et al., 2020), the supervisor-rated overall performance (Takeuchi et al., 2005b; Takeuchi et al., 2009; Wang and Takeuchi et al., 2007; Wang and Tran, 2012), the self-reported overall performance (Kim and Slocum, 2008), overall objectively measured using records (Chen et al., 2010), and self-rated contextual performance (Kawai and Strange, 2014; Kawai and Mohr, 2017).

2) Interaction adjustment was significantly and positively associated with self-rated task performance (Abdul Malek and Budhwar, 2013), self-rated contextual performance (Shaffer et

al., 2006 in study 3; Wu and Ang, 2011; Abdul Malek and Budhwar, 2013), the supervisor-rated contextual performance (Kraimer et al., 2001), and the supervisor-rated overall performance (Wang and Takeuchi, 2007; Wang and Tran, 2012). However, interaction adjustment had no significant effect on self-rated overall performance.

3) General adjustment was repeatedly shown to have a non-significant effect on performance (either a composite or separate dimensions) (Kraimer et al., 2001; Wang and Takeuchi, 2007; Takeuchi et al., 2005b; Abdul Malek and Budhwar, 2013). However, Takeuchi et al. (2009) highlighted that general adjustment could be related to overall performance by means of affective commitment.

4) One study by Bhatti et al. (2013a) found the each of the three facets was significantly related to the supervisor-rated performance when they mediated the relationship between some antecedents and performance.

5) When both (adjustment and performance) were treated as composite measures, the results; however, were also quite divergent. For example, overall adjustment (3 facets) was found to positively affect self-reported performance (composite) (Qin and Baruch, 2010; Lee and Sukoco, 2010; Abdul Malek, Budhwar, and Reiche, 2015; Lee and Kartika, 2014). Lee et al. (2013) concluded that overall (work and interaction) adjustment was positively associated with self-rated performance (composite). Contrary to the previous findings, overall (3 facets) adjustment was found to have no impact on the supervisor-rated task and contextual performance (Kraimer and Wayne, 2004), and self-reported performance (Lee and Sukoco, 2008; Sambasivan et al., 2017).

6) Departing from the two dominant facets of performance, Nunes et al. (2017) differently explained self-reported performance in terms of production, local employees' management, and reading the external environment, and this measure was positively impacted by overall (work and general) adjustment.

The meta-analysis by Bhaskar-Shrinivas et al. (2005) provided general consensus that the improved task, contextual, and overall performance resulted from higher levels of adjustment, with work adjustment to be significantly related to the task facet, interaction adjustment to be significantly related to contextual performance, and the three facets to be significantly associated with overall performance. Similarly, another meta-analysis by Mol et al. (2005) found support for the significant positive effect of work and interaction facets on performance; however, no support was found for general adjustment.

Another stream of inquiry unveiled that adjustment might affect performance through some mediators. For example, the meta-analysis by Hechanova et al. (2003) suggested that adjustment could be linked to performance through the mediating effect of organisational commitment and job satisfaction. Additionally, Harrison and Shaffer (2005, p.1470) found that adjustment was significantly related to the task and contextual facets by means of "effort regulation", with contextual performance influenced by interaction adjustment via leader-team exchange and time to proficiency, and task performance impacted by work adjustment through active task avoidance and passive task neglect.

To sum up, the direct relationship between adjustment and performance is still equivocal. This is consistent with the critical review by Thomas and Lazarova (2012, p.257), who allude to some early research that questions the direct impact of adjustment on performance, and

eventually, they conclude that “the adjustment–performance relationship typically ranges from non-existent to what can only be considered as moderate.”

The following section discusses the concept of job deprivation and its theoretical underpinnings.

## **2.4. The Concept of Perceived Job Deprivation**

According to relative deprivation theory, scholars consider job deprivation as the degree of discrepancy between what expatriate expects and he/she actually perceives regarding certain attributes of their jobs due to social comparison with local colleagues (Crosby, 1976; Kraimer et al., 2012; Ren et al., 2015). It is an indicator of unmet psychological needs or expectations (Ren et al., 2015). As mentioned previously, three psychological needs are captured from the self-determination theory (Ryan and Deci, 2000), namely autonomy, competence, and relatedness. Autonomy, as outlined by Lopes et al. (2017, P.451), signifies “the extent to which workers are able to exercise control and influence over their immediate work activities. It refers to the scope of the latitude to take decisions on the content, methods, scheduling, and performance of work tasks.” Competence denotes the mastery in utilising skills and surrounding resources in dealing with the social and physical environment (Deci and Ryan, 2000; Spreitzer et al., 2005). Relatedness refers to the sense of belonging, intimacy, and being respected by others (Bauer and McAdams, 2000). However, as the present study adopts the self-reference/self-comparison perspective (Crosby, 1982), job deprivation may occur when expatriates actually perceive less discretion, competency, relatedness than expected before expatriation in the host country job compared to their previous home jobs. Both relative deprivation and self-determination theories underpinning this concept will be discussed below

## **2.4.1. The Relative Deprivation Theory (RDT)**

### **2.4.1.1 Historical Background about RD and the Evolution of Deprivation Concepts and Models**

The term “deprivation” was first coined by Stouffer and his colleagues (1949) when they examined the relationship between military promotion and satisfaction among soldiers in the US Army during World War II. For further explanations, Stouffer and his group indicated that military police seemed to be more satisfied than Air Corps, although the former had fewer opportunities for promotion compared to the latter. The result contradicted the fact that promotion opportunities reinforced satisfaction. However, this was justified plausibly, as Stouffer explained that military police individuals who did not receive a promotion were prone to compare themselves to their counterparts who were not promoted as well. Conversely, Air Corps individuals who were not promoted tended to put themselves in a comparison with their peers who were promoted. Thus, Air Corps individuals were more likely to be deprived than their military police counterparts. Evidently, it seems that there was no coincidence between objective and subjective reality and that social comparison was the cornerstone of discontent dynamics (Carrillo et al., 2011).

As a matter of fact, the social comparison theory (SCT) provided the platform for the development of the RDT by Davis (1959). According to Festinger (1954), the central assumption of the SCT is that individuals assess their circumstances in comparison with other individuals. However, the RDT is distinctive from the SCT, as it provides a better understanding of the comparison processes that an individual may undergo until experiencing the feelings of resentment emerging from the evaluation of the current situation (Seepersad, 2009). Since the concept of deprivation was first invoked by Stouffer (1949), Davis (1959)

was the first theorist to introduce his first model of RD. Afterwards, several scholars followed his seminal work as a base for developing their models of RD as well. All the consequential leaps that occurred in the RD models included Davis' (1959), Runciman's (1966), Gurr' (1970), and Crosby's (1976) and (1982) models. The key assumptions of the three formers are summarised in the following table<sup>12</sup>. Following this, Crosby's models are discussed in detail because her latest model represents the main pillar in conceptualising job deprivation in the present study.

Table 2.2: A Summary on Earlier RD Models

RD Models	Key Assumptions
Davis's (1959)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Davis's (1959) model is the first formal model of RD, which focuses on how RD may be an outcome of social comparisons.</li> <li>• His model states that three conditions/antecedents should exist prior to the individual's experience of RD, which include: "(1) Awareness that a similar other possesses X; (2) Desire of X; and (3) Feeling deserving of X."</li> <li>• He distinguishes between in-group and out-group comparisons.</li> </ul>
Runciman's (1966)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• First, he states that deprivation is experienced by a person when "(1) He does not have X; (2) He sees some other person, which may include himself at some previous or expected time, as having X; (3) He wants X; and (4) He sees it as feasible that he should have X" (Runciman, 1966, p.10).</li> <li>• Second, he further argues that RD varies in terms of degree (intensity), frequency (proportion), and magnitude (the degree to which the actual deviated from expected).</li> <li>• Third, similar to Davis, he alludes to the distinction between two types of RD: egoistic (individual) and fraternal (group).</li> </ul>
Gurr's (1970)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• According to his view, RD is defined as a state existing when there is a contradiction between an individual's "value expectations" and</li> </ul>

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<sup>12</sup> More details on these 3 models can be found in section (A) of the Online Appendix (OA) of chapter (2) at: [Press here](#)

	<p>“value capabilities” (i.e., when there is a disparity between what people think they deserve and what they can achieve (Gurr, 1969, p.462).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Gurr (1970) categorises three typologies of RD: (1) “decremental deprivation” arises when there is a stagnation in people’s feelings of entitlement, accompanied by a decrease in their capabilities (what they actually achieve); (2) “aspirational deprivation” exists when people’s expectations and feelings of deservingness increase, whereas their capabilities remain stable; and (3) “progressive deprivation”, which occurs when there is both a concurrent increase in people’s expectations of deservingness and a decrease in what they actually have at the same time.</li></ul>
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#### **2.4.1.1.4. Crosby's (1976) and (1982) Models**

Crosby is one of the most popular theorists who endeavoured to develop her RD model drawing on the earlier work conducted by the previous scholars (Carrillo et al., 2011). Crosby (1976, p.88) defines RD as “the emotion one feels when making a negatively discrepant comparison. This negative sense can be referred to as a sense of grievance or resentment.” In her model, Crosby (1976, p.91) claims that for feelings of resentment to exist, five prerequisites/preconditions must be realised by a person: “(1) See someone else possesses X; (2) Want X; (3) Feel entitled to X; (4) Think it is feasible to obtain X; and (5) Lack a sense of personal responsibility for not having X.” More importantly, Crosby considers these five preconditions as one package, which means that the absence of one condition will result in a feeling that is different from the concept of deprivation. For example, the non-existence of the “want” condition may result in the emotion of “righteous indignation.” Moreover, if the deservingness variable is missed, this will create the emotion of “disappointment.” In the case of lacking the feelings of feasibility to attain X, “dissatisfaction or jealousy” may result. When an individual blames him/herself for his/her current situation, he/she may experience feelings of “envy or dissatisfaction with him/herself.”

Based on Crosby's previous definition, Tougas et al. (2005) explicate that RD involves two components: cognitive and affective. The cognitive component denotes the personal comparison with others either similar or not. Whilst, the affective aspect reflects the post-comparison state of resentment engendered and caused by the disparity perceived between the person and the referent. Hence, the affective component is considered as a mediator between the cognitive one and the outcomes of RD. In her 1976 model, not only Crosby explains the antecedent/preconditions of RD but she incorporates the negative state that may lead an

individual to react/ behave in a specific way to reduce these aversive feelings as well. These behaviours may be oriented to the deprived person (self) or the entire society. Moreover, she claims that such behaviours can be channelled differently, depending on numerous factors: (1) the nature of a person whether he/she is intro-punitive (i.e., inwardly absorb his anger) or extra-punitive (i.e., outwardly express his anger against society); (2) the person's level of control; and (3) the availability of opportunities for change. The outcomes of RD are shown in the following figure:

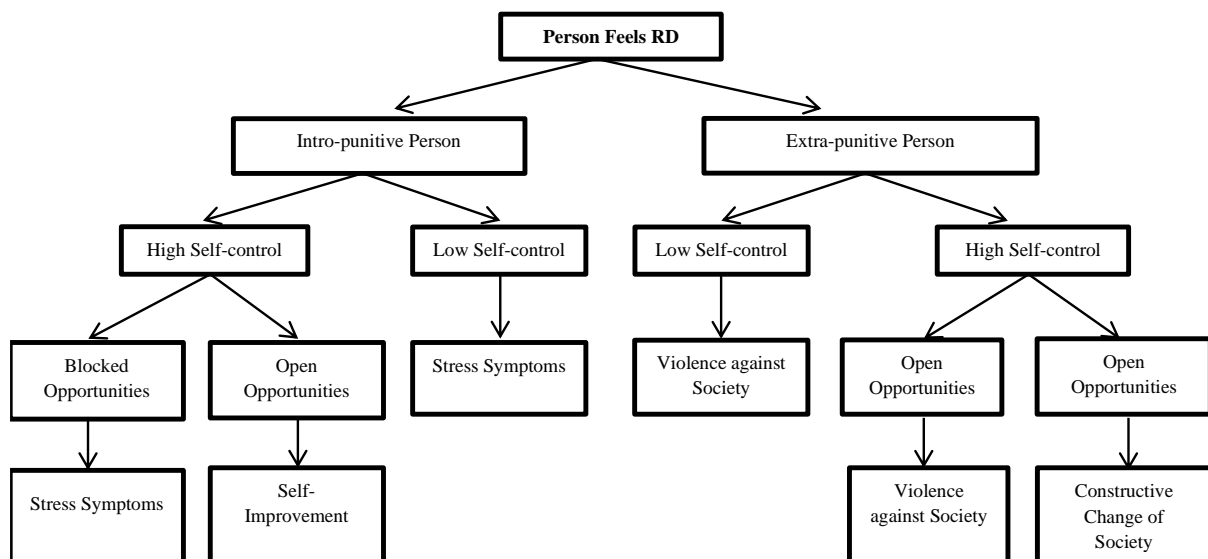


Figure 2.1: Outcomes of RD (Adapted from Crosby, 1976, P.100)

However, one of the most significant criticisms elevated against Crosby's previous model is that it typically focuses on egoistic deprivation, overlooking the importance of fraternal deprivation despite her awareness of Runciman's distinction, in which he highlights that fraternal deprivation is more significant than egoistic one in predicting social actions. The previous claim has been supported by several researchers later (Seepersad, 2009).

In a later study, Crosby (1982) empirically tested the five preconditions of her model as an attempt to put her theory into action. She collected data from 405 participants comprising three populations that included women, employed men, and housewives to examine the feelings of deprivation in Newton, Massachusetts. The results were surprising, as her model were condensed to only two preconditions to be supported. More specifically, only the “want” and “deserve” conditions explained the majority of variance in the final outcome (deprivation). This result provided further support to Gurr’s argument regarding the feasibility condition. This work of Crosby was conceived to be a significant shift to reconceptualise RD, which was redefined as the feelings of resentment that exist when there is a discrepancy between what a person wants and what he/she deserves (i.e., RD was confined between “want” and “deserve”). Hence, both want and deserve were found to be essential predictors of RD. From another perspective, Crosby’s (1982) work enlightened a new route and generated space to widen the span of referent choice. Despite this developmental leap in the RDT, Crosby et al. (1986) were doubtful regarding the result that only the two-factor model better fitted the preconditions of RD, thereby calling future researchers for further research to confirm whether her results could be supported or not. In response, Oslen et al. (1995) provided additional support for Crosby’s (1982) two conditions model.

As a matter of fact, all the previous theories emphasise the importance of external referent (other persons) to use in comparison. However, the latest concept of RD developed in Crosby’s (1982) work introduces what is known as “self-referent.” The latter concept, therefore, suggests that comparisons with others (“external referents”) are not necessarily required and that a person may feel deprived when he/she runs a comparison between the current situation and what might have been.

Accordingly, Folger et al. (1983, p.268) postulate that “RD is a function of referent cognition about the outcomes available if a procedure had not been changed.” In particular, they highlight that the two conditions may exist if procedures change. The first condition is “high referent”, which appears when the outcomes yielded from the old procedure are better compared to the new one. Whilst, the second condition is named as “low referent”, which exists when the outcomes achieved from the old procedure are below those of the new one. Consequently, the feelings of resentment are hypothesised to be more exacerbated within the “high referent” circumstances than within the “low referent” situation; however, this should be accompanied by justifying the change in procedures. Taking it another way, Folger et al. (1983) conclude that deprivation will only occur when the current (actual) situation is not better than what might have been, and when this lacks a rational justification for the reasons of change (i.e., why things changed).

Indeed, several scholars devote significant attention to referent typologies, most of which suggest that comparisons can be conducted against prior, current, or future referent and that referents can be categorised into four kinds: “self, other internal, other external, and system” (Kulik and Ambrose, 1992, p.214). In her typology of categorising referents, Seepersad (2009) indicates that self-referenced category of RD occurs when a person conducts a comparison with him/herself or when a group compares a specific aspect of itself to another one of itself and that this comparison may take place at a single, multiple points of time, or even overtime. Moreover, she argues that “intrapersonal comparison” is one of the two specific subcategories of self-referencing typology. In such a kind of intrapersonal comparison, a person may compare himself with himself or a person may, alternatively, compare his current position/standing to the past or future position/standing. Empirical evidence emphasises/confirms that individuals

are more likely to employ self-future (e.g., expected promotion) and self-past (e.g., prior job) (Oldham et al., 1986).

Earlier theorists, such as Goodman (1974) and Levine and Moreland (1987), allude to two critical dimensions that play a crucial role in selecting referents. Both models coincide in that selecting referents is based on the availability of information about the referent and to what extent the referent is relevant. It was argued that Goodman (1974) did not examine these two dimensions (i.e., availability of information and referent relevance) as direct predictors of the referent choice but they were included as intervening variables (i.e., mediators) because both of them were predetermined by some psychological processes, such as personal characteristics and situational characteristics. However, Goodman's model was quite limited because of lacking further details on the personal and situational characteristics that might explain these processes. Kulik and Ambrose (1992) addressed the previous limitation and revisited Goodman's model. On the other hand, other accounts examined the role of referent selection in predicting behavioural and attitudinal consequences. For example, Scholl et al. (1987, p.113) found that perceptions of equity using seven kinds of pay referents (e.g., job, company, occupational, educational, age, system, and self-equity) were differentially related to satisfaction, intention to remain, and frequency of extra-role behaviours.

Several commentators point out that multiple dimensions can be used by individuals in comparison with others. These dimensions can include class, power, or status. Later, research identifies a vast range of dimensions upon which comparison can be established and RD may be experienced, such as job positions, material status, income, political opportunities, residential locations, and access to health care. Despite the multiplicity of comparable dimensions, they are not equal in terms of their importance. When it comes to the consequences

of RD, some dimensions are suggested to have a more significant impact than others (Seepersad, 2009).

To sum up, in the light of the previous exhibition of the RDT models and debate around referent typologies, the current study is more interested to adopt the intrapersonal form of self-referencing, with a major emphasis on comparison between the current standing with the past position on some valued dimensions. The dimensions of self-comparison under examination in the current study are the aforementioned three psychological needs of the SDT, including autonomy, competence, and relatedness. Taking them together in the current study's context of expatriation, expatriates are expected to compare their current job position in the Egyptian context with their previous/past jobs in their home countries on these three dimensions. The SDT and its' three constructs are discussed in further detail later, following the next section that displays the recent studies addressing the RD concept and its antecedents and consequences in the fields of management and organisational psychology in general and in the expatriation context in particular.

#### **2.4.1.2. Prior Studies on Relative Deprivation and its' Antecedents and Consequences**

The concept of RD has been given prominent attention in the social psychology field, as many sociologists and psychologists sought to investigate some social issues that contributed to RD and its negative consequences. Besides the outcomes of RD in the external society theoretically displayed in Crosby's (1976) model, the next section exhibits a review of some additional empirical and conceptual studies that address the antecedents and outcomes of RD. However, it is worth mentioning that social comparisons and RD problems are not only prevalent in social life but they do exist in the organisational context at workplace. Based on a review of (41)

articles, the analysis of the selected papers on RD are disentangled into the antecedents and consequences of RD in two categories: outside (14 articles)<sup>13</sup> and inside (27 articles) the workplace. However, the review focuses on the latter because the present study focuses on deprivation at workplace

#### **2.4.1.2.1. Antecedents and Consequences of RD In-the-Workplace**

Several studies have discussed the factors contributing to the emergence of RD and how it might have a detrimental effect on workplace outcomes in different contexts in both domestic and expatriation literature. For instance, RD has been investigated in the educational workplace context, especially in academic careers by Feldman and Turnley (2004), who found that some demographic characteristics (age, education, and tenure) predicted RD. However, gender had no effect, and this contradicted Yngwe et al.'s (2003) results. More significantly, Feldman and Turnley (2004) concluded that social comparisons in terms of job status between temporary (part-time) and permanent (full-time) academic staff evoked RD, such that when permanent faculty members were used as referents, adjunct members would feel more deprivation. Ultimately, they stipulated that RD was a negative predictor of job satisfaction, professional commitment, organisational citizenship behaviours, whereas it positively predicted careerist attitudes toward work.

Furthermore, Buunk et al. (2003) conducted one of the few distinctive longitudinal studies that endeavoured to examine how RD changed over time due to social comparisons regarding performance between colleagues at workplace. More specifically, they concluded that RD at

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<sup>13</sup> As part of the broader review, supplementary materials are provided for more in-depth coverage of salient literature captured by the search regarding the 14 articles addressing RD outside the workplace, which can be found in section (B) of the OA of chapter (2) at: [Press here](#)

T2 was more likely to increase for individuals highly engaged in upward (frequent comparisons with other better performance may create a relative frustration due to unfavourable evaluations) and downward (frequent comparisons with others with low performance might create irritation because of doing too much work compared to others) comparisons at T1. In another study, Buunk et al. (2005) elucidated how frequent social comparisons induce different affective feelings at workplace, depending on individual differences. They demonstrated that upward comparisons were more salient and frequently stimulating low negative affect and high positive affect than downward comparisons. In particular, individuals highly oriented toward social comparisons reported both more upward comparisons followed by more negative affect, and more downward comparisons followed by more positive affect. By contrast, individuals who perceived their workplace as a cooperative experienced relatively more downward comparisons and reported more negative affect post-downward comparisons and more positive affect post-upward comparisons. Hence, it can be elicited that social comparisons may be differently interpreted based on differences in individuals' perceptions.

Recent research investigated whether social and self-comparisons might moderate the relationship between work time control and work stress (Weiß, 2017). Results unveiled that when individuals compared their current work control with the previous one, they might perceive the situation as worse-off in case of detecting a discrepancy, leading them to feel deprived and stressed. However, social comparisons (other referents) had no moderating effect. This indicates that self-comparisons may have a more precarious effect on employees' attitudes than social comparisons, although the majority of the literature focuses extensively on social comparisons. Thus, it needs further attention and investigation.



Apparently, comparisons conducted either by using “others referents or self-referents” are entrenched in the social context, and reside at the core of RD. However, the selection of the appropriate referent for comparison is determined by some factors. In their conceptual article, Kulik and Ambrose (1992) explored the personal and situational determinants of the referent choice in RD. They developed a set of propositions informing that personal factors (e.g., age, race, gender, tenure, and position) and some job facets (e.g., changes in allocation procedures and physical proximal) might affect individuals’ selection of referents for comparisons. However, their study requires empirical investigation.

Furthermore, Tougas et al. (2005) investigated the negative outcomes of RD within the groups of policewomen. They found that egoistic RD intensified discounting as one of the subcomponents of psychological disengagement, which in turn, undermined self-esteem. Additionally, personal RD resulted in greater discounting of work evaluation, thereby devaluing the significance of police work. Additionally, Koomen and Frankel (1992) found that both egoistic and fraternal deprivation can be engendered via discrimination. They highlighted that the former was a better predictor of personal satisfaction than the latter and that the latter was more strongly associated with group militancy than the former. Another supporting evidence from the Canadian labour market emphasised that immigrants’ job satisfaction was low compared to indigenous citizens, as Fang et al. (2013) attributed that to the potent social networks that were typically possessed by natives compared to immigrants. The latter, therefore, were less likely to succeed in obtaining high-quality jobs compared to natives as a result of social segregation and deprivation that engendered the sense of “liability of foreignness” within immigrants.

In the organisational context, RD provided fruitful insights as a mechanism explaining individuals' responses in the relationship between negative stereotyping and performance. In their conceptual article, Javadian and Zoogah (2014) argued that if a person was exposed to negative stereotyping, and experienced high resentment due to unfavourable position emerging from comparison, he/she would confirm this negative stereotyping and act with a vulnerability that stifled performance. On the other hand, if a person encountered high resentment regarding this unfavourable situation, he/she might contradict the negative stereotyping and react to it either by maintaining his/her performance from inhibition or improving his/her performance. This is consistent with Pettigrew's (2002) argument that individuals' reactions resulting from RD are twofold. One outcome is that the deprived person may dis-identify with the deprivation context, which in turn, lessens performance. However, other potential outcomes may occur, such as self-improvement behaviour or raising protests against deprivation. This implies that personality characteristics affect these processes.

Another study by Smith et al. (2008) integrated the RDT and the cognitive appraisal model of emotions to examine the emotional reactions of university faculty members to pay inequities at the group level. The findings revealed that anger and sadness were unique potential emotional responses to collective disadvantageous, which in turn, triggered protest intentions and diminished organisational allegiance. It seemed that pay inequality had a detrimental effect on organisational performance. However, Park and Kim (2017) suggest that the pay gap has its pros and cons for organisational performance because feelings of motivation or demotivation rely on the degree of the pay gap. Thus, they argue that such a relationship between both constructs may be curvilinear and the positive impact of the pay gap may be more salient when there is a consistency between organisational culture and pay scheme (i.e., when performance-

oriented culture is high). Moreover, Bordia and Blau (1998) confirmed that “pay referent comparison level” had a positive significant impact on pay level satisfaction.

In the leadership literature, RDT was utilised to explain how employees-leader exchange relationships might invoke RD due to unfavourable social comparisons between workers with low-quality exchange relationships with superiors and those with high-quality relationships. Bolino and Turnley (2009) developed a conceptual framework, in which they proposed that employees’ perceptions of the quality of relationships between leaders and subordinates might be negatively associated with feelings of RD that might result in negative reactions and attitudes, such as stress and unethical behaviours.

Undeniably, in the repatriation setting, the RDT provides valuable insights in improving scholars’ understanding of how employees assess their current job situation and workplace outcomes; however, these studies are quite limited. For instance, Ren et al. (2013) integrated the RDT with the job demands-resources model to examine how the lack of career advancement, breaching psychological contracts, and underemployment constituted a stressful situation contributing to repatriates’ deprivation. Therefore, repatriates, after the completion of international assignments and returning home, might experience career dissatisfaction. Some scholars examined the reasons underlying turnover among repatriates who completed their international assignments. According to Kraimer et al. (2012), repatriates compared themselves with their peers who did not undertake international assignments concerning promotion opportunities, pay, and autonomy. When repatriates suffered from a lack of greater opportunities relative to others with no international experience, they were more likely to get deprived. Hence, they might perceive their organisations as not recognising their “international employee identity.” Thus, when their RD was high, along with their international employee

identity feelings, their identity strain increased. As a result, job deprivation (as a moderator) catalysed the impact of repatriates' international identity on identity strain. Finally, the latter was argued to be a good precursor of turnover.

By looking at the other side of the coin, the expatriation literature highlights that deprivation may be faced by local hosts as well. Some other few studies utilised the lens of RD in understanding local employees' reactions toward expatriates' pay policies and the compensation gap existing between these two groups (see Toh and Denisi, 2003; Leung et al., 2009; Mahajan, 2011; Hon and Lu, 2015). The most common assumption in this stream is that local hosts select expatriates as comparative referents and get engaged in social comparisons with the latter regarding the pay policies disparity (Toh and Denisi, 2003) that is perceived by the former as largely unfair and unjustified (Leung et al., 2009). Hence, they are more likely to experience relative deprivation. Moreover, Hon and Lu (2015) found that this compensation disparity was negatively associated with local employees' creativity. In a similar vein, Mahajan (2011) bolstered the importance of not undermining the precarious impact of ethnocentric pay policies, as these ongoing comparisons might generate the "we and they" mindset and exacerbate hostility and dissension between both parties. Therefore, not only might expatriates lose a significant source of support but also be categorised as "out-groups" by locals. Mahajan (2011) further developed a conceptual model proposing a solution for this issue via what is known as the "Cultural Alignment Pay Model." This model suggested localising expatriates' compensation, thereby obliterating the feelings of the unfairness of compensation payment. This, in turn, might improve locals' perceptions of justice and stimulate their positive work outcomes, such as knowledge sharing and volunteer cooperation with expatriates. Apparently,

this model seemed to embrace the notion of localising MNCs' practices, consistent with the tenets of institutional theory.

Another strand of research has given special attention to RD emanating from underemployment issues caused by downsizing and their negative consequences in the domestic literature. For example, Feldman et al. (2002) outlined that demotions of laid-off managers in low-paid, skilled, and hierarchical jobs inhibited job attitudes. Moreover, RD was found as a mediator explaining the relationship between underemployment and lower psychological well-being. Another study by Wang (2016) concluded that turnover was largely expected for employees experiencing underemployment. However, some studies glimpsed the opposite issue, namely "cognitive over-qualification." For instance, Fine and Nevo (2008) found that when individuals possessed high cognitive abilities that surpassed the normal requirements, they might feel a mismatch with their jobs (i.e., a lack of person-job fit). Accordingly, they might self-perceive a disadvantaged job condition. As a result, the feelings of deprivation emanating from over-qualifications might constrict their job satisfaction. Hence, it can be inferred that not only underemployment but also over-qualification are negative antecedents of work-related outcomes.

Research highlighted that the same phenomenon of underemployment was experienced by expatriates due to holding lower-quality jobs on their international assignments compared to their previous status (Benson and Pattie, 2008; Bolino and Feldman, 2000). More importantly, Bolino and Feldman (2000) confirmed that several organisational and job-related factors contributed to expatriates' underemployment, thereby leading to their vulnerability to negative job attitudes, mental health, and job performance. Consistently, recent research concluded that underemployment inhibited expatriate adjustment, which in turn, dwindled both task and

contextual performance, and triggered their thoughts of premature repatriation (Kawai and Mohr, 2017). According to Lee's (2005) study, the phenomenon of underemployment is particularly more ubiquitous among self-initiated expatriates. The findings also suggest that underemployment predicts negative attitudes, such as job and career dissatisfaction, which may adversely influence organisational effectiveness.

The next subsection reviews and discussed the literature on the SDT.

### **2.4.2. The Self-Determination Theory (SDT)**

Richard Ryan and Edward Deci are the two original developers<sup>14</sup> of the SDT of motivation that triggers the assumption that people, by instinct, seek personal growth and psychological well-being (Gange and Deci, 2014). SDT, as highlighted by Ryan (2009), is an “organic psychology” theory that presumes that human being is inherently active and has an evolving inclination towards development and psychological growth, and this inclination should be corroborated by specific nutriments and pillars existing within the social environment. From the SDT's perspective, these nutriments represent the three basic psychological needs that are contemplated to be necessarily satisfied. These three pillars are discussed in the following section.

#### **2.4.2.1. SDT and the Three Basic Needs**

In the realm of SDT, needs are conceptualised as “innate psychological nutriments that are necessary for ongoing psychological growth, integrity, and well-being” (Deci and Ryan, 2000,

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<sup>14</sup> For more details on the historical background of SDT, please see section (C) of the OA of chapter (2) at: [Press here](#)

p.229). It has been empirically shown that needs' satisfaction is of utmost importance for people's health and growth (Baard et al., 2004; Bauer and Mulder, 2006). Deci and Ryan (2000) consider needs as instinct and define them at the psychological level compared to early needs theories developed by Murray (1938) and Hull (1943), who consider needs as learned/acquired and define them at the physiological. Their theoretical concept is premised on the "organic dialectical meta-theory" that postulates that human is a proactive organism by nature and is prone to engage in pursuing interesting activities, affiliating to social groups, and achieving integration between interpersonal and intra-psychic experiences (Deci and Ryan, 2000). It is claimed that the term "human needs" is extremely useful in providing a means to understand how social contextual factors influence controlled versus autonomous motivation (Deci and Ryan, 2008).

The SDT typically states that there are three fundamental innate psychological needs that are necessary to be satisfied, involving the needs of relatedness, competence, and autonomy (Ryan and Deci, 2000). Relatedness is portrayed as "the desire to feel connected to others to love and care and to be loved and cared" (Bauer and McAdam, 2000, p.277). Competence refers to the experience of the mastery in utilising skills and surrounding resources in dealing with the social and physical environment (Deci and Ryan, 2000; Spreitzer et al., 2005). Autonomy, as outlined by Lopes et al. (2017, p.451), signifies "the extent to which workers are able to exercise control and influence over their immediate work activities. It refers to the scope of the latitude to take decisions on the content, methods, scheduling, and performance of work tasks."

It is asserted that these three salient needs are universal and essential for well-being (Sheldon et al., 2001; Kuvaas, 2008; Deci and Ryan, 2014). The SDT does not theorise the strength of these needs based on individual differences but to what extent they are satisfied (Kuvaas,

2008). It is highlighted that when people find chances for satisfying these needs, they may be motivated. For people to experience feelings of being self-determined instead of self-controlled, they should satisfy their need for autonomy (Deci et al., 1991). Further discussions about the basic needs are provided in the next section that addresses the theories underpinning the SDT.

#### **2.4.2.2. Mini Theories Underpinning the SDT**

SDT is a macro-theory of motivation and a comprehensive framework that is composed of four “mini theories”, namely Cognitive Evaluation Theory (CET), Organismic Integration Theory (OIT), Causality Orientation Theory (COT), and Basic Needs Theory (BNT). Each of these four mini theories is briefly elaborated below:

##### **2.4.2.2.1. Cognitive Evaluation Theory (CET)**

The CET capitalises on the term “intrinsic motivation” (Guntert, 2015). Intrinsic motivation is defined as “doing an activity for its own sake because one finds the activity inherently interesting and satisfying” (Gagne and Forest, 2008, p.225). By contrast, extrinsic motivation “occurs when executing an activity merely for an instrumental reason” (i.e., to yield an outcome regardless of the activity itself) (Gagne and Vansteenkiste, 2013, p.66). According to Deci et al. (1991), when people are intrinsically motivated, they tend to perform activities that appeal to and interest them, and they do so with their full discretion under no constraints or financial rewards. On the contrary, when people are extrinsically motivated, their performance is limited to achieving some separable outcomes. Hence, an antagonistic attitude seems to exist between both forms of motivation (Gagne and Vansteenkiste, 2013). Perhaps the most prominent premise of the CET is that intrinsic motivation may be inhibited by external rewards under



certain conditions. More specifically, when people are compelled to perform a certain activity even with a reward receipt, they may perceive such a reward as a coercing mechanism to control their behaviours. Accordingly, what was perceived previously as interesting turned out to be routine to perform. In other words, the CET emphasises that the extent to which intrinsic motivation may be influenced by a reward is contingent on how an individual will perceptually/cognitively interpret such a reward in terms of being informational (e.g., providing positive feedback about receipt's competence, thereby boosting intrinsic motivation) or controlling (Sheldon et al., 2003)<sup>15</sup>.

Nonetheless, the CET is challenged when it comes to the application in the workplace context. For example, Kunz and Pfaff (2002) point out that the workplace setting may normally include extrinsic rewards. Moreover, Gagne and Deci (2005) highlighted that several activities and job tasks may be perceived as uninteresting. Hence, the potential of reinforcing intrinsic motivation cannot be guaranteed.

#### **2.4.2.2.2. Organismic Integration Theory (OIT)**

As noted from the previous section, intrinsic motivation has captured the majority of research interest in the SDT. However, one important question should be raised here: Is it still possible for people to experience positive motivation while performing extrinsic (unenjoyable) tasks? In other words, are all forms of extrinsic motivation mischievous? It is eligible to answer “yes” and “no” to the former and latter questions, respectively (Sheldon et al., 2003). This can be explained by the OIT that holds a different point of view toward extrinsic motivation (Ryan,

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<sup>15</sup> For more details on reward interpretation impact on intrinsic motivation, please see section (D) of the OA of chapter (2) at: [Press here](#)

2009; Guntert, 2015). Specifically, the OIT suggests that the social environment may facilitate the internalisation and integration of external regulations, such as cultural practices and norms. Internalisation is a natural process at which individuals are inclined to “take in” regulation, value, or social mores. Whilst, integration occurs when human beings transform these external regulations, values, and social mores into their own. The optimal functioning of internalisation will lead these values to be fully accepted and integrated with the individual’s self. Thus, non-intrinsic behaviours may become self-determined. However, the failure of internalisation processes will lead individuals to feel externally controlled (Ryan and Deci, 2000, p.235; Deci and Ryan, 2000). In this essence, Ryan (2009, p.2) states that “individuals are more likely to internalise and integrate a practice or value if they experience choice with respect to it, efficacy in engaging with it, and connection with those who convey it.” These previous processes are elaborated in the following continuum developed by Ryan and Deci (2000), in which they portray motivation to range along a spectrum with two extremes: amotivation and intrinsic motivation.

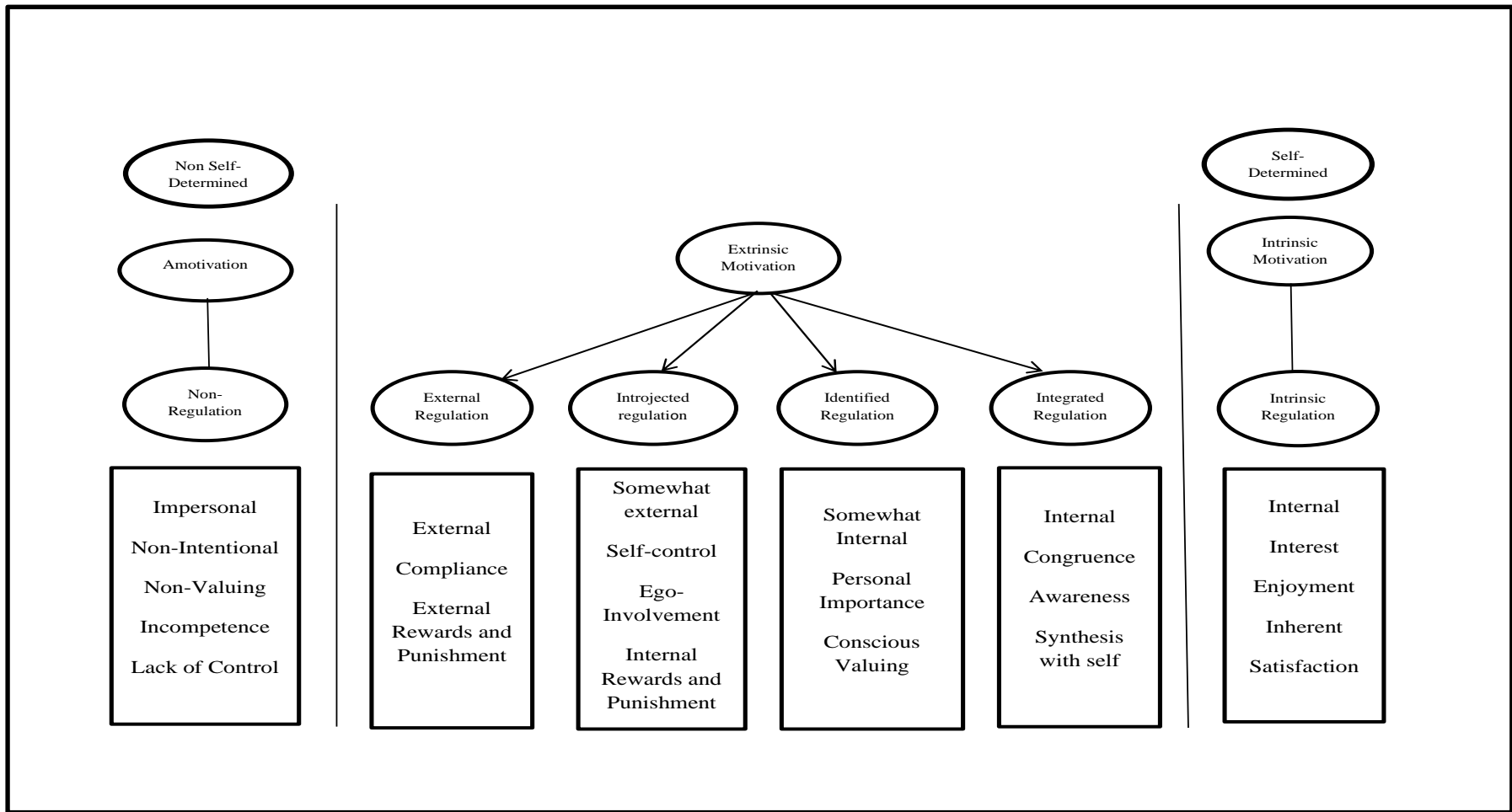


Figure 2.2: The Self-Determination Continuum (Adapted from: Ryan and Deci, 2000, p.72)

As illustrated in the figure above, different types of motivations are positioned along this spectrum. Not only do they vary in terms of the degree of self-determination but also differ in the regulatory styles, locus of causality, and regulatory processes. Located at the left extreme of the spectrum, amotivation describes the state when individuals act with no intention, along with the least degree of self-determination (autonomous) (i.e., perceive the activity as less valuable, experience a lack of the sense of competency, and do not expect desirable outcomes) (Ryan and Deci, 2000). Intrinsic motivation, on the other hand, is positioned at the right extreme where individuals are satisfied and pleased while doing an activity; it is the highest self-determined prototype (Ryan and Deci, 2000). In the middle of the continuum, extrinsic motivation is portrayed with four categories of regulatory styles, namely external regulation, introjected regulation, identified regulation, and integrated regulation<sup>16</sup>.

It is noteworthy to highlight the three significant features of the previous continuum. First, it is suggested that both identified and integrated regulations are more autonomous compared to the two former subcategories of extrinsic motivation (Ryan and Deci, 2000). Moreover, integrated regulation is the most recent form of extrinsic motivation, which shares some commonalities with intrinsic motivation (Gagne and Deci, 2005). Second, the internalisation process in the SDT is progressive over time; however, this does not insinuate that this spectrum is developmental, such that individuals must navigate each stage regarding a certain regulation. Alternatively, a new behaviour regulation can be internalised at any point, depending on situational factors and prior experience assimilated (Ryan and Deci, 2000). This was further explained by Gagne and Deci (2005, p.335) by stating that “SDT proposes that, under optimal

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<sup>16</sup> For more details on the 4 categories of extrinsic motivation, please see section (E) of the OA of chapter (2) at: [Press here](#)

conditions, people can, at any time, fully integrate a new regulation, or can integrate an existing regulation that had been only partially internalized.” Third, the span of assimilated behaviour is not constrained, which means that it can increase over time as long as people’s cognitive capacity increases (Ryan and Deci, 2000).

To epitomise, the OIT postulates that individuals are inherently stimulated to internalise the regulation of important activities, albeit uninteresting. Moreover, different styles can emerge from internalisation processes. Finally, internalisation processes may be affected by the social context (Deci et al., 1994).

#### **2.4.2.2.3. Causality Orientation Theory (COT)**

Although the previous two mini theories allude to the impact of social context on individuals’ internalisation process and motivation, the COT stresses the role of individual differences in the sense that the appraisal of and orientation to the external environment may be differently perceived among individuals (Gagne and Vansteenkiste, 2013; Ryan, 2009). Based on Deci and Ryan’s (1985) work, causality orientation is conceptualised as “the dispositional propensity to ascribe causality for his/her behaviour to internal factors, external factors, or neither” (Sheldon et al., 2003, p.365). In this regard, this approach suggests that people have different tendencies in regulating their behaviours, which can generally comprise tripartite styles: autonomous orientation, control orientation, and impersonal orientation (Deci and Ryan, 2000).

An autonomy-oriented individual tends to display more proactivity and discretion to initiate and regulate behaviours. Conversely, control-oriented individuals often locate causality externally (Sheldon et al., 2003) and resort to environmental control systems (e.g., deadlines

and reward contingencies) in regulating their behaviour, and such individuals are expected to choose a status/pay-based job (Gagne and Vansteenkiste, 2013; Ryan, 2009). Ultimately, an impersonally oriented individual, irrespective of the locus of causality, does not behave deliberately and has less capacity to decide on things (i.e., the experience of incompetency or a lack of personal control). This prototype is normally associated with depression and amotivation (Deci and Ryan, 2000; Ryan, 2009; Sheldon et al., 2003). It is claimed that if these three psychological needs are generally forestalled, this will lead to impersonal-orientation development (Deci and Ryan, 2008).

Hence, it should be acknowledged that autonomy orientation, control orientation, and impersonal orientation do correspond to “intrinsic motivation and well-integrated extrinsic motivation, external and introjection regulation, and amotivation”, respectively (Deci and Ryan, 2000, p.241). Additionally, as outlined by Sheldon et al. (2003), it is noteworthy to differentiate between locus of control and locus of causality, and not to confound them. According to them, locus of control deals with people’s beliefs regarding the extent to which their outcomes are determined by either internal (i.e., within the individual) or external forces. Whereas, locus of causality is associated with people’s belief regarding the extent to which their behaviours are self-determined or controlled by external factors. Taking it another way, the former focuses on the “determinants of outcomes”, whilst the latter focuses on the “determinants of behaviours” (Sheldon et al., 2003, p.365).

#### **2.4.2.2.4. Basic Needs Theory (BNT)**

The BNT presumes that basic needs, as a concept, are associated with wellness. This theory elaborates on the independent impact of each need on wellness, and that the influence of behaviour on well-being is largely dependent on needs’ satisfaction (Ryan, 2009). In the realm

of the SDT, as previously illustrated, needs are considered as instinctive and psychological, and their satisfaction is a determinant of psychological growth and well-being (Deci and Ryan, 2000). More specifically, the SDT posits that it is essential to satisfy the three universal psychological needs: autonomy, competence, and relatedness. In this essence, one question may tap into the mind of the reader: To what extent the SDT's needs are distinctive from Maslow's theory of needs? Indeed, the SDT is different from Maslow's one in two ways. First, the SDT does not set a hierarchical style for the three needs. Rather, these three needs are of equal importance and essentiality approximately for every human being, and they are continuously operative since birth. Thus, there is no need to classify them as lower-order versus higher-order needs. (Deci and Ryan, 2014; Sheldon et al., 2003). In other words, it is stated that the SDT does not propose significant developmental, cultural, or individual differences with respect to the importance of these needs; however, the ways of satisfying and expressing these needs definitely do vary across ages, cultures, and individuals (Sheldon et al., 2003). Second, the SDT places a major emphasis on needs' satisfaction as an antecedent of outcomes rather than needs' strength (Deci and Ryan, 2014).

Another important question exacerbated by Sheldon et al. (2003, p.367) in the light of the significance of needs' satisfaction: "What characteristics of social, academic, and work environment best support psychological need-satisfaction?" Drawing on the BNT, three determinants are expected to be conducive to needs' satisfaction: autonomy support, competence support, and relationships support. For example, in the workplace setting, for an employee to be motivated, the manager should: (1) ensure that this employee experience competency by encouraging the employee's abilities and providing appropriate task and material support; (2) help the employee to be related to him by demonstrating genuine care

about his thoughts and showing empathy; and (3) help the employee to feel autonomous by allowing him to select and endorse his own way of doing tasks, albeit being non-enjoyable tasks (Sheldon et al., 2003).

Indeed, most of the research on the SDT has given a primary focus on the impact of autonomy on outcomes in different contexts, such as education (Deci et al., 1991), and parenting social issues (Joussemet et al., 2008). However, the next section displays a review of some studies on the SDT's psychological needs and workplace-related outcomes.

#### **2.4.2.3. Review of Studies on Predictors and Outcomes of SDT's Psychological Needs.**

A set of (26) articles have been reviewed to identify the determinants and outcomes of the three basic psychological needs. Generally speaking, numerous studies coincide on that when people's basic needs are fully satisfied, they report a high level of autonomous motivation compared to others performing under pressure (controlled) and those acting unintentionally with demotivation (Deci and Ryan, 2014). In their distinctive theoretical review on the SDT, Gagne and Deci (2005) confirmed that the SDT received a relatively limited test within the organisational context. Moreover, they developed a conceptual framework exploring the antecedents and outcomes of autonomous motivation. More specifically, they developed a set of propositions stating that the social environment (job characteristics and organisational autonomy support ambience) and individual differences facilitate autonomous motivation that was expected to be positively related to performance, psychological well-being, organisational trust and commitment, and job satisfaction. However, they called future researchers to empirically test their model.



Some theoretical and empirical studies shed a spotlight on the role of organisational practices in the satisfaction of the three basic needs. For instance, Gagne (2009) proposed that the HRM practices (training, job design, managerial styles, and performance appraisal and compensation systems) might contribute to the fulfillment of these needs, which subsequently, might enhance autonomous motivation. Empirical research found that the HRM practices (training, empowerment, developmental appraisal, mentoring, but not career development) had a positive significant influence on these needs' fulfillment, which in turn, led to work engagement and organisational commitment, sequentially. In their "integrative model of human growth at work", Spreitzer and Porath (2014, p.251) theoretically propose some contextual factors that may impact the satisfaction of these three psychological needs, which in turn, may fuel thriving. These contextual factors include performance feedback, decision-making discretion, the climate of trust/respect, broad information sharing, and environmental volatility. A recent study by Hu et al. (2019) examined the indirect effect of corporate social responsibility (in-role and extra-role) on employees' well-being via the satisfaction of the three needs. Their empirical findings revealed that corporate social responsibility significantly predicted the satisfaction of both competence and autonomy, which in turn, reinforced employees' well-being.

Other studies have mainly focused on associating the satisfaction of the three basic needs with ill/well-being and psychological health outcomes. For example, Niemiec et al.'s (2009) findings indicated that upward well-being and downward ill-being were predicted by changes in satisfying the three basic psychological needs. Bortholomew et al. (2011) uncovered that when the three basic needs were satisfied, subjective vitality increased. Whereas, when these needs were thwarted, subjective vitality decreased and exhaustion increased. However, it is noteworthy to highlight that the studies addressing the relationship between needs' satisfaction

and well-being have been conducted in other different contexts, along with motivation at workplace, such as education (Ryan and Deci, 2009), psycho-therapy (Ryan and Deci, 2008), and sports and physical activities (Bartholomew et al., 2011).

Similarly, other scholars demonstrated that competence-need satisfaction was positively related to job satisfaction at workplace. Additionally, this positive relationship was stronger (i.e., moderated) for people possessing high achievement motives. Although prior research unfolds that better performance outcomes can be yielded by autonomous motivation profile, less is still known about the relationship between controlled motivational profile and performance, especially because the majority of the scholarly research has been undertaken in the educational domain (Howard et al., 2016). However, some scholars found that external and introjected regulations together might positively predict performance (Moran et al., 2012; Boiche et al., 2008). Concomitantly, Cerasoli et al. (2014) found that intrinsic motivation was a strong antecedent of the quality of work, and external regulations had a strong spill-over on the quantity of work. In the same sense, it is suggested that motivational profiles vary in their influence on both in-role (required) and extra job (discretionary) performance. For elucidation, it is expected that a high-autonomous profile may enhance both required and discretionary performance, whereas a high controlled profile may only promote required performance (Gagne et al., 2015).

More recently, Howard et al. (2016) criticised the majority of research in sports and educational domains because of their tendency to dichotomise regulations into a binary (autonomous or controlled) category. Hence, drawing on person-centered analysis, they argue that multiple motivational profiles (amotivated, moderately autonomous, highly motivated, and balanced) may occur simultaneously within employees and the ascription in each profile depends on the

job type. Their findings highlight that: (1) government employees are more likely to attach with the motivated profile; (2) highly motivated and autonomous profiles boost work performance and well-being; and (3) the existence of external regulations in combination with autonomously motivation profile seems to be less influential; however, its sole presence without autonomous motivation has a deleterious impact on outcomes. Hence these results lend support for the fact that autonomous motivation is more significant in contributing to positive outcomes than controlled motivation.

Indeed, a review of numerous studies unveiled that job satisfaction, well-being, and performance have been given considerable attention as important outcomes of intrinsic motivation engendered by the satisfaction of the three needs. For instance, Baard et al. (2004) found that both autonomous causality of subordinates and autonomy support predicted the three needs' satisfaction, each of which had a positive spill-over on workplace adjustment, with relatedness satisfaction manifested to be the strongest antecedent of job performance. More interestingly, males were found to be better satisfied, better adjusted, and perceive the organisational ambience as more supportive relative to their counterparts of females. Another study unfolded that intrinsic motivation was a potent antecedent of work performance across functions and tasks. In the meantime, intrinsic motivation mediated both the relationship between job autonomy and work performance and the relationship between supervisory support (for autonomy, competence, and development) and work performance (Kuvaas, 2008). Another study emphasised that perceptions of autonomy, competence, and relatedness support were influenced by the quality of upward feedback. That is subordinates who perceived upward feedback as a positive chance to improve their work conditions and also perceived more autonomy, competence, and relatedness support were more likely to experience high intrinsic

motivation that is necessary for work engagement and self-directed learning (Bauer and Mulder, 2006). In support of the previous findings, Guntert (2015) concluded that autonomy-supportive leadership was significantly and positively related to job satisfaction, turnover intentions, and organisational citizenship behaviours and that such a relationship was mediated by intrinsic motivation.

Similarly, Nie et al. (2015) demonstrated that the higher the level of autonomy support perceived by employees, the higher the level of autonomous motivation that flourished their well-being (i.e., promoted job satisfaction and thwarted physical ill symptoms and stress). Further support was provided by Gillet et al.'s (2016) study that sought to probe the moderating effect of job ambiguity on the relationship between types of motivation and their outcomes. Specifically, they demonstrated that autonomous motivation was positively associated with satisfaction and that this relationship was quite stronger when job ambiguity was low. Conversely, controlled motivation was positively related to anxiety, and such a relationship was strengthened when job ambiguity was high. At the first glance, it seems that most of the studies have primarily focused on autonomy, thereby leading to the impression that it is the most important dimension out of the three psychological needs. However, one study indicated that competence-need satisfaction was essential for promoting job satisfaction at workplace and that when individuals possessed a high level of achievement motive, the relationship between competence and satisfaction became stronger (Hofer and Busch, 2011). More surprisingly, some scholars demonstrated that for individuals to experience autonomy at workplace, both competence and relatedness should be satisfied (Richer et al., 2002). This insinuated that these three needs complement and reinforce each other. The findings also emphasised that competence and relatedness satisfaction had a positive predictive power on

autonomous motivation, which in turn, positively contributed to job satisfaction and inversely related to burnout.

A study conducted by Chen and Jang (2010) utilised the SDT to examine the antecedents and consequences of motivation of online learners. Results confirmed that contextual (autonomy and competence) support reinforced the satisfaction of needs, which in turn, promoted self-determination/motivation. However, learning outcomes (engagement, achievement, perceived learning, and course satisfaction) were not predicted by student's self-determination. The previous result contradicted Bauer and Mulder (2006), who found that motivation predicted engagement, but this inconsistency might be attributed to the difference of the two studies' contexts. Some scholars depended on some valuable insights from the SDT regarding the psychological and motivational processes to explain the relationship between job characteristics (demand and resources) and subordinates' performance. To explicate, Trepanier et al. (2015) found that job demands contributed to employees' psychometric complaints and psychological stress via controlled motivation and psychological need discouragement. Whilst, job resources were positively associated with employees' engagement and performance via autonomous motivation and needs satisfaction.

A distinctive diary study by Ryan et al. (2010) over 21 days at random points of time was conducted to examine the impact of needs' satisfaction on individuals' well-being both in and out the workplace setting. Their results indicated that during the weekend individuals displayed more vitality, positive mood, and fewer physical symptoms compared to the weekdays. This could be explained by their experience of less autonomy and relatedness during the weekdays compared to the weekend.

From the previously discussed studies, it can be inferred that when the individuals' three psychological needs of competence, autonomy, and relatedness are highly satisfied, they may become more intrinsically motivated so that positive outcomes are more likely to be achieved. On the other hand, when these needs are thwarted, individuals may become demotivated so that mischievous outcomes are more likely to be experienced.

The concept of thriving is discussed in detail in the following section.

## **2.5. Thriving at Workplace**

### **2.5.1. The Definition of Thriving**

Thriving, as a concept, has gained considerable attention in the positive organisational behaviour inquiry over the past decade (Paterson et al., 2014). This concept was firstly coined by Spreitzer et al. (2005, p.538), who defined it as “the psychological state in which individuals experience both a sense of vitality and a sense of learning at work.” Vitality captures the affective component, which reflects the sense of aliveness and being energised. Learning is the cognitive component, which contends with the acquisition and application of new skills and knowledge (Spreitzer et al., 2005; Carmeli and Spreitzer, 2009; Porath, et al., 2012). Thus, both the affective (vitality) and cognitive (learning) components serve as a thermometer of progress and momentum for thriving individuals at work. (Spreitzer et al., 2005; Porath et al., 2012).

Additionally, both dimensions are inextricably indispensable and their intersectionality constitutes the grounds for thriving. That is if individuals feel energised, with no opportunity to develop their current skills and knowledge, they are more likely to feel stagnation. By contrast, if individuals do significantly learn but lack vigour, they are more vulnerable to depletion and burnout (Spreitzer et al., 2005; Spreitzer et al., 2012). However, Spreitzer and

Sutcliff (2007, p.76) state that “thriving is not a dichotomous state”. This means that thriving is a spectrum where individuals are less or more likely to thrive at any point in time. Therefore, thriving is not an individual disposition, but a psychological state that is malleable (i.e., change over time) and configured by the context of the workplace. Putting it another way, individuals’ thriving may increase, decrease or be steady relative to their previous thriving experience at a specific temporal point, depending on the contextual features of their workplace. Accordingly, the work context may promote or inhibit employees’ eagerness toward development and growth.

### **2.5.2. The theoretical Foundation of Thriving**

The “socially embedded model of thriving developed” by Spreitzer et al. (2005, p.539-540) is premised on two assumptions. First, they assume that thriving cannot be simply occurred by merely inhibiting stressors. For thriving to take place, specific unit contextual factors, resources, behaviours, and psychological states need to exist. When the right resources and contextual enablers are available at the workplace, thriving is more likely to exist, even under exhausting circumstances. Second, some people may thrive more than others depending on their individual traits. They further assume that their model is socially embedded because both learning and vitality are entrenched in social systems. That is vigour emanates from social connections with others. Similarly, learning occurs via social interactions (e.g., speaking with others about work and observing how other function at work) rather than isolation from others (Spreitzer et al., 2005). This model is shown in the following figure:

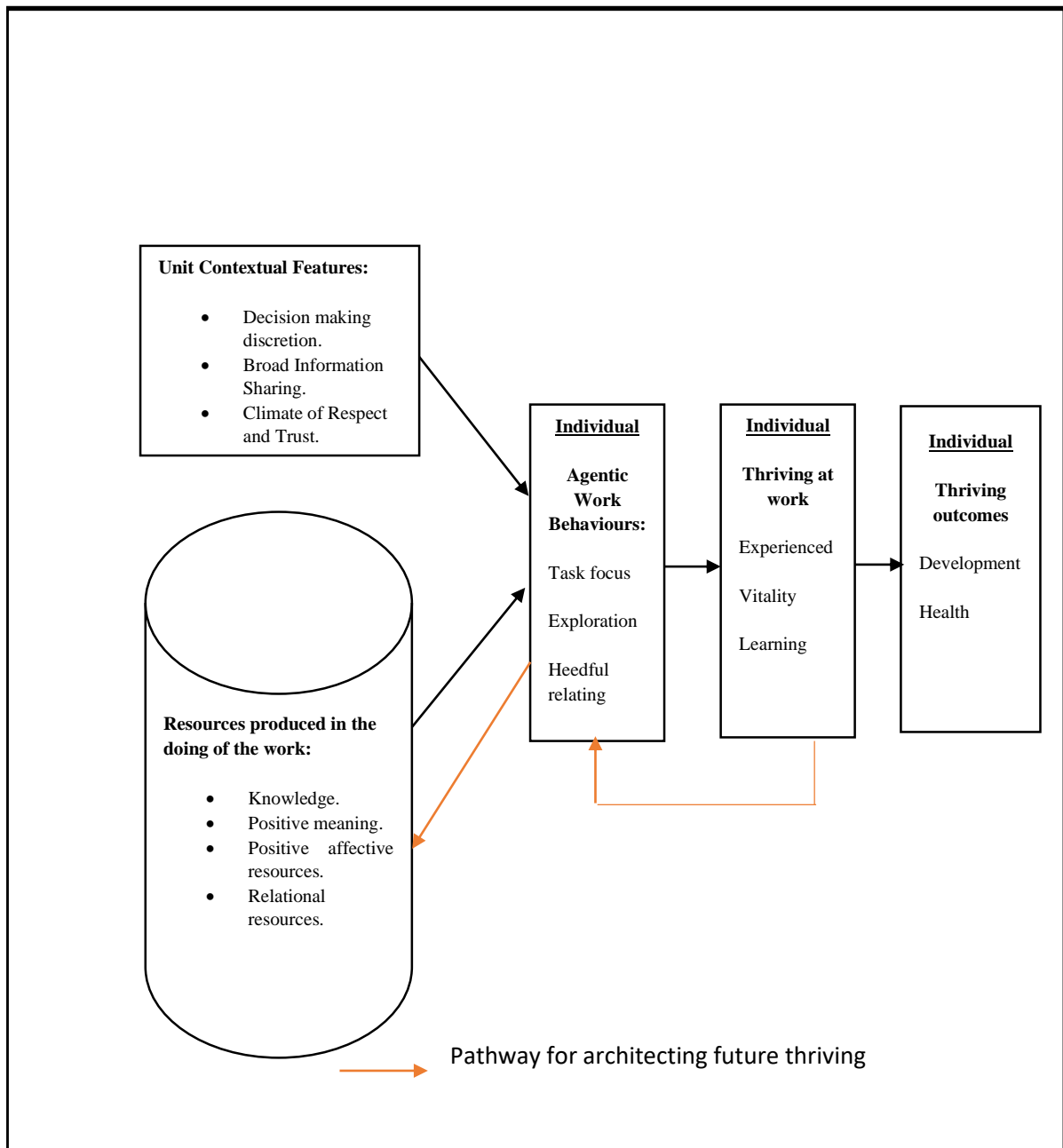


Figure 2.3: The Social Embeddedness Model of Thriving Source: Adapted from Spreitzer et al. (2005, P.540)

The above-portrayed model is centrally premised on the proposition that individuals may thrive if they are situated/positioned in a workplace with particular contextual characteristics. Specifically, Spreitzer et al. (2005) focus on two key factors: the resources generated during the functioning of the work and the social structural characteristics of the workplace context.



Firstly, they claim that when the workplace is characterised by a trust and respect climate, broad information sharing, and decision-making autonomy, individuals may act agentially and thrive. The model identifies three agentic behaviours that emerge when individuals are purposeful and active at work: (1) task focus (i.e., concentration on achieving the allocated responsibilities at work); (2) exploration (i.e., risk-taking, experimentation, and discovering new directions in an innovative behaviours); and (3) heedful-relating (i.e., subordinating attention to the individuals working around us). Secondly, they further allege that when individuals respond in an agentic manner, they are more prone to generate and cultivate a set of resources while functioning their work. These resources include knowledge, positive meaning, positive affective resources, and relational resources. This bulk of resources subsequently promotes sustainable thriving.

Perhaps one of the distinctive features of this model can be noticed via the feedback link (red line) between agentic behaviours and thriving. This explicitly supports the fact that thriving is a self-adaptive process. Put this another way, thriving individuals are stimulated to behave in an agentic way as a meaningful cue to perpetuate their positive psychological state and make it sustainable. In particular, when thriving is experienced, individuals are more inclined to focus on completing their tasks, heedfully relate to other colleagues, and explore in order to establish more resources that foster and enable sustained thriving (Spreitzer et al., 2005). Hence, these resources are renewable and generated by means of the agentic behaviours displayed by thriving individuals (Spreitzer and Sutcliff, 2007).

Having discussed the theoretical assumptions underpinning the “socially embedded model of thriving”, the next section reviews previous studies on the antecedent and outcomes of thriving.

### **2.5.3. Prior Studies on the Predictors and Outcomes of Thriving**

A set of (50) articles has undergone categorisation and coding to reveal the common themes.

In doing so, the review and analysis resulted in generating the following generic themes:

#### **2.5.3.1. Antecedents of Thriving at Workplace**

While the previous socially embedded framework has theoretically portrayed three factors contributing to thriving, it lacked rigorous empirical testing (Spreitzer and Sutcliff, 2007). Accordingly, several scholarly efforts have been exerted to provide empirical support to Spreitzer and colleagues' (2005) model and explore and empirically examine more determinants contributing to thriving and its outcomes as well. One of the preliminary empirical works is by Carmeli and Spreitzer (2009) who outline that when the work environment is infused with trust, this will nurture thriving by means of connectivity. A similar recent study by Kocak (2016) granted support for the positive effect of organisational trust on thriving.

Thriving, as a Western concept, was firstly validated and measured by the initial empirical study by Porath et al. (2012), who provided strong evidence supporting the dimensionality of thriving. They further confirmed the establishment of convergent and discriminant validity of thriving when associated with other theoretical constructs, such as proactive personality, learning and performance goal orientations, positive and negative affectivity, and core self-evaluation. Thriving has also been proven to vary over time and across work and non-work domains (Porath et al., 2012). Subsequent researchers have empirically supported the positive significant effect of proactive personality (Jiang, 2017) and core self-evaluation (Walumbwa, Muchiri, Misati, Wu, and Meiliani, 2018) on thriving at work. It should also be acknowledged

that although thriving was validated in the western context, some scholars recently validated it in a non-Western context, such as China (Jiang, Jiang, and Nielsen, 2019a). Specifically, in study 1, the previous scholars confirmed that thriving was a second-order construct comprising the two subdimensions of vitality and learning. In study 2, they examined some individual predictors of thriving and they unfolded that learning goal orientation and exploration had a strong positive influence on thriving.

A distinctive diary study by Niessen et al., (2012) was conducted to investigate the dynamism of thriving. Their study was premier in partially empirically examining Spreitzer and associates' (2005) model of thriving. They sought to examine how resources (relational, knowledge, and positive meanings) could potentially contribute to thriving and whether this association might be mediated by the three agentic behaviours (heedful-relating, exploration, and task focus) at three temporal points (morning, lunch, and end of the workday) for five consecutive days. Their results reported a significant positive relationship between employees' positive meanings experienced in the morning and their senses of learning and vitality (thriving) at the end of the day. Additionally, exploration and task-focus were found to mediate the relationship between positive meanings and thriving.

Besides the individual work behaviours and contextual engines of thriving figured out in Spreitzer and associates' (2005) model, Paterson et al. (2014) introduced PsyCap (individual resources) and supervisor support climate (contextual) that have been given minimal attention in previous thriving research. They found that both supervisor support climate and psychological capital were indirectly associated with thriving via the mediating role of task focus but not heedful relating. Consistently, subsequent studies lent support for the previous findings because high levels of thriving were also positively triggered by perceived

organisational support and heedful relating (Abid, Zahra, and Ahmed, 2015), supervisor and co-worker support (Zhai, Wang, and Weadon, 2017), PsyCap (Nawaz et al., 2020), and optimistic and hopeful personalities (Abid, Arya, Arshad, Ahmed, and Farooqi, 2021). Besides the aforementioned dynamic personality (e.g., PsyCap) traits, regulatory focus (a chronic/stable personality feature) was also associated with thriving, such that promotion-focus and prevention-focus were found to positively and negatively influence thriving, respectively (Wallace et al., 2016).

A recent study by Cullen, Gerbasi, and Chrobot-Mason (2018) attempts to identify the negative aspects of the social work environment, which lead to energy depletion and learning disruptions, and how these negative determinants of thriving may be buffered by individual differences. In particular, by viewing organisations as a highly politicised environment, Cullen et al. (2018) postulate that employees who are positioned in communication networks and act as major sources of information for their colleagues are less likely to thrive due to the indirect effect of two stressors: role load and role ambiguity. Moreover, they claim that when those employees possess high levels of political skills, they may be more adept at handling these two stressors, thereby experiencing high levels of thriving. Their empirical findings highlighted that both stressors were negatively associated with thriving, and political skills possession was a direct significant predictor of thriving but its moderating role only alleviated the negative effect of role ambiguity on thriving. Jiang et al., (2019a) also pointed that role ambiguity hindered thriving.

Likewise, Flinchbaugh, Luth, and Li (2015) drew on the challenge-hindrance stressors model to diagnose how individuals evaluated these two divergent stressors and responded differently to them, and to identify whether individuals might thrive in the existence of stressors. The

results indicated that hindrance stressors diminished thriving, whereas challenge stressors positively boosted thriving. The diary study by Prem, Ohly, Kubicek, and Korunka (2017) emphasised that challenge stressors (learning demands and time pressure) were positively related to the learning component but had no direct influence on the vitality component. Thus, the authors suggested that the two components needed a finer distinction in future research.

Furthermore, Feeney and Collins (2015) placed emphasis on the role of close relationships in promoting thriving. Based on the attachment theory, they developed a conceptual/theoretical model depicting the mechanisms of social-relational support (relational catalyst support and source of strength support) through which thriving in the long run potentially might occur in two distinct life contexts (life opportunities for growth and life adversity). However, this proposed model still needs empirical investigation. Qualitative research also adduced fruitful evidence for the importance of relationships for thriving at work. For instance, Conway and Foskey (2015) explored the experience of thriving in the trade apprentices' social context in the Australian vocational system. They concluded that when apprentices, managers, and vocational trainers/instructors demonstrated affiliation behaviours, not only would this generate meaningful relationships but also eventually diffuse the feelings of thriving among them.

Other scholars have devoted a bur-going interest in the influence of perceived workplace behaviours and emotions on thriving. For example, employees' thriving was negatively influenced by workplace incivility either directly (Nawaz et al., 2020) or indirectly via inhibited belongingness (Gkorezis, Kalampouka, and Petridou, 2013), workplace violence by means of inhibited job satisfaction (Zhao, Shi, Sun, Wang, Zhang, Gou, Han, Sun, and Fan, 2018), and knowledge hiding behaviour via inhibited psychological safety at workplace (Jiang, Hu, Wang,

and Jiang, 2019b). On the other hand, another stream of research demonstrated that thriving was positively driven by some other positive workplace contextual factors, such as prosocial motivation and civility (Abid, Sajjad, Elahi, Farooqi, Nisar, 2018; Nawaz et al., 2020), and workplace spirituality (van der Walt, 2018).

Additionally, Frazier and Tupper (2018) shed light on psychological safety as an important contextual feature for fostering thriving. They allege that when the organisational climate is infused with psychological safety, where employees can experiment without fear of making mistakes and criticism, learning and improvement may be fostered because of not being banned from trying again. Moreover, a psychologically safe work environment reinforces the sense of relatedness and social resources formulation that are essential for health and physical strength feelings, thereby promoting aliveness and vitality. Their empirical findings support the positive significant impact of psychological safety on thriving.

Furthermore, some job characteristics were contemplated as contextual enablers of thriving. For example, Jiang, Milia, Jiang, and Jiang (2020) asserted that both task identity and autonomy served a crucial role in creating the positive psychological experience of thriving. They further verified that the relationship between task identity and thriving was further strengthened when employees received low-quality mentoring.

Moreover, Bensemmane, Ohama, and Stinglhamber (2018) examined how the overall team justice, as a contextual factor, might serve as a potential predictor of thriving via the mechanism of self-efficacy. They found that overall team justice enhanced employees' self-efficacy, which in turn, resulted in higher levels of thriving. Moving beyond the conventional concept of self-efficacy, Christensen-Salem and colleagues (2020) have recently alluded to a specific type of self-efficacy, dubbed as "creative self-efficacy". Their study's findings supported that creative

self-efficacy was a meaningful and active determinant that served a cognitive and motivational function to foster thriving. The previous strand of research provided a mounting potent evidence of the predictiveness of self-efficacy on thriving.

A substantial line of inquiry placed emphasis on the role of perceived leadership styles and leaders' behaviours in predicting employees' thriving. For instance, the results corroborated the significant positive influence of authentic leadership (Mortier, Vlerick, and Clays, 2016) and empowering leadership (Li, Liu, Han, and Zhang, 2016; Ali, Lei, Jie, and Rahman, 2018) on thriving. While some researchers found no significant relationship between school directors' transformational leadership and followers' thriving (Niessen, Mader, Stride, and Jimmieson, 2017), other associates unfolded that this style of leadership was significantly/positively associated with thriving in the industrial sector (Hildenbrand, Sacramento, and Binnewies, 2018). Regardless of the leadership styles, some emerging studies shed a spotlight on the importance of a high-quality dyadic relationship between managers and followers as an enabler of thriving and provided considerable evidence for the significant positive effect of leader-member exchange on subordinates' thriving (Li, 2015; Xu, Loi, and Chow, 2019). Research on employees' thriving has also reported the positive significant impact of leaders' paradoxical behaviours<sup>17</sup> on subordinates' thriving<sup>18</sup>. Additionally, Russo, Buonocore, Carmeli, and Guo

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<sup>17</sup> Paradoxical leaders are those who are characterised by five contradictory dyads: “combining self-centeredness with other centeredness; (2) maintaining both distance and closeness; (3) treating subordinates uniformly, while allowing individualization; (4) enforcing work requirements, while allowing flexibility; and (5) maintaining decision control, while allowing autonomy” (Yang et al., 2019, p.2).

<sup>18</sup> Despite addressing thriving at the individual level, it is worth mentioning that recent research shifted attention to the influence of leadership styles on the yet relatively overlooked emerging theme of collective thriving (at the team/unit level) that constituted the amalgamation of individual thriving. As a contextual factor at the unit level, servant leadership positively contributed to the unit (collective) thriving (Walumbwa, et al., 2018). Similarly, authentic leadership was found to result into greater collective thriving and such a positive relationship was partially mediated by mindfulness (Wu and Chen, 2019).

(2018) found that family-supportive supervisor behaviour might promote subordinates' thriving through two sequential mediators, namely psychological availability and work-family enrichment under the contingent role of need for caring in study 2 (Chinese sample).

The most recent and sole meta-analysis conducted by Kleine et al. (2019) sought to comprehensively examine the antecedents and outcomes of thriving. In support of some of the previous antecedents, it has been well-verified that proactive personality, PsyCap, work engagement, positive affect, supportive co-worker behaviour, perceived organisational support, supportive leader behaviour were positive significant predictors of thriving.

As previously noted, thriving was firstly examined in the expatriation context in the study by Ren et al. (2015), who examined the impact of expatriate job deprivation regarding the three basic psychological needs (autonomy, competence, and relatedness) on thriving during their international assignment. They concluded that only job deprivation-competence had a significant negative relationship with thriving; however, they did not find any support for the other two aspects of job deprivation. Their results disaccorded with the previous domestic research, in which task autonomy (Jiang et al., 2020) and belongingness/connectivity (Carmeli and Spreitzer, 2009; Gkorezis et al., 2013) were verified to be particularly significant antecedents of thriving. More recently, Ren et al.'s (2021) study unfolded that cultural intelligence significantly influenced expatriates' propensity to thrive.



So far, the antecedents<sup>19</sup> of thriving have been thoroughly discussed, the following subsection discusses the outcomes/consequences of thriving.

### **2.5.3.2. Outcomes of Thriving at workplace**

Thriving has been shown to be associated with a plethora of individual and organisational outcomes. Earlier theorists posit that thriving serves as a gauge for peoples' self-development and alleviates depression, anxiety, thereby enhancing mental health (Spreitzer et al., 2005; Spreitzer and Sutcliff, 2007). It is also suggested that thriving individuals have a high level of job performance, manifested in individuals' productivity, high commitment to their jobs and companies, and ability to utilise knowledge and skills for improving performance (Spreitzer and Sutcliff, 2007; Spreitzer et al., 2012; Spreitzer and Porath, 2012).

Empirically speaking, the previous benefits of thriving for both individuals and organisations have been well-documented in scholarly research. There seems a general consensus that thriving at workplace maximises individual job performance (Porath et al., 2012; Paterson et al., 2014; Li, 2015; Ali et al., 2018; Frazier and Tupper, 2018), task mastery (Niessen et al., 2017), and creative performance (Christensen-Salem et al., 2020). Furthermore, thriving is found to be positively conducive to better health (Porath et al., 2012; Walumbwa et al., 2018). In alignment with this, Sirois and Hirsch (2013) unveil that psychological thriving eliminates depression in individuals with arthritis.

The extant empirical research also highlights that thriving thwarts burnout (Porath et al., 2012; Hildenbrand et al., 2018), fortifies career development initiative and self-development (Porath

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<sup>19</sup> For further supplementary material on the antecedents of thriving as part of the broader review, please see section G of the OA of chapter (2) at: [Press here](#)

et al., 2012; Paterson et al., 2014), and promotes proactive behaviours (Niessen et al., 2017). Another line of inquiry further indicates that thriving can lead to higher levels of innovation (Wallace et al., 2016), reinforce innovative work behaviours (Carmeli and Spreitzer, 2009; Abid et al., 2015), and augment employees' creativity (Yang et al., 2019). Other positive outcomes of thriving for individuals have also been empirically emphasised, such as lower levels of turnover intention (Abid et al., 2015), the development of self-leadership abilities (Abid et al., 2021), higher life satisfaction (Flinchbaugh et al., 2015; Zhai et al., 2017), greater helping behaviours (Frazier and Tupper, 2018; Wu and Chen, 2019), greater work engagement (Abid et al., 2018), affective commitment (Li, 2015), higher job satisfaction (Jiang et al., 2020), organisational citizenship behaviour (Li et al., 2016), and improved career adaptability (Jiang, 2017). The findings of Kleine et al.'s (2019) meta-analysis bolstered the significance of thriving<sup>20</sup> in predicting some important individual outcomes, such as burnout, commitment, and performance.

Regarding the organisational/unit level outcomes of thriving, research unfolded that collective thriving resulted in higher collective affective commitment, which ultimately fostered the overall unit performance (Walumbwa et al., 2018) and collective proactivity behaviour (Wu and Chen, 2019).

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<sup>20</sup> Apart from its role as an optimal predictor of myriad outcomes at the individual level, some studies captured its boundary condition (moderating) role by interacting with some variables to predict final outcomes. For example, thriving was found to dampen the negative effect of de-energising relationships on performance (Gerbasi, Porath, Parker, Spreitzer, and Cross, 2015) and strengthen the positive effect of trust in leader on individual creative behaviour (Jaiswal and Dahr, 2017).

Departing from the domestic setting, in the expatriation context, thriving was found to predict expatriates' success, embodied in engagement in their jobs (work engagement) and their retention on the current assignments (actual retention) (Ren et al., 2015).

The following section reviews the literature on CC-PsyCap.

## **2.6. The Concept of Cross-Cultural Psychological Capital (CC-PsyCap)**

### **2.6.1. An Overview on the Conceptualisation, Theoretical Underpinnings, and Operationalisation of Psychological Capital (PsyCap)**

As a key strategic resource, PsyCap has received a prominent interest<sup>21</sup> in the positive psychology and organisational behaviour fields<sup>22</sup> because of its impact on individual performance (Newman et al., 2014). PsyCap is defined as “An individual’s positive psychological state of development that is characterized by: (1) having confidence (self-efficacy) to take on and put in the necessary effort to succeed at challenging tasks; (2) making a positive attribution (optimism) about succeeding now and in the future; (3) persevering toward goals and, when necessary, redirecting paths to goals (hope) in order to succeed; and (4) when beset by problems and adversity, sustaining and bouncing back and even beyond (resiliency) to attain success” (Luthans et al., 2007, p.542). H.E.R.O is the acronym provided to the four dimensions of PsyCap<sup>23</sup> (Youssef and Luthans, 2014). This package of positive psychological capacities is positioned as “State-Like” because they are developmental and open for investment relative to the “Trait-Like” capacities, including core self-evaluation and

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<sup>21</sup> This growing attention to this positive construct is not limited to academics but included organisations because it focuses on employees’ strengths and well-being, rather than vulnerability (Avey, Luthans, and Jensen, 2009).

<sup>22</sup> By the advent of the new millennium, drawing on positive psychology movement (Seligman and Csikszentmihalyi, 2002), organisational behaviours scholars recognised the need to abandon the negativity approach that contends with fixing employees and managers’ weaknesses and to shift focus on individuals’ positive psychological resources and strengths that are measurable, developmental, and effectively manageable for improving performance at workplace (Luthans, 2002a; Luthans, 2002b). Accordingly, Luthans and his associates identified four positive psychological resources/capacities that form the grounds of the second-order concept of PsyCap (Luthans and Youssef, 2004; Luthans and Youssef, 2007).

<sup>23</sup> PsyCap is differentiated from other constructs that are capital-laden, such as: (1) economic capital (i.e., “what you have”: tangible and financial assets); (2) social capital (i.e., “who you know”: network of social relationships, friends, and contacts); and (3) human capital (i.e., “what you know”: a set of intangible assets, such as skills, knowledge, experience, education, and ideas) (Luthans, Luthans, and Luthans, 2004, p.46).

the big five personality taxonomy (Luthans and Youssef, 2007). In addition, they are crucial for organisations seeking sustainable competitive advantage (Luthans and Youssef, 2004).

The majority of research on PsyCap has extensively capitalised on the COR theory as a core theoretical platform because of its usefulness in illustrating how people utilise their surrounding resources in reacting to and managing stressors. The key principle of the COR theory is that individuals strive to get their resources enhanced and protected. Resources are viewed as valuable means that an individual utilises to attain and protect different valued resources, such as objects, contextual, personal, and energy. Additionally, such resources can be replaced, renewed, or depleted (Hobfoll, 2002; Hobfoll, 2011). The four psychological capacities of PsyCap are classified as personal resources. If individuals possessed greater amounts of personal psychological resources (e.g., optimism, hope, self-efficacy, and resilience) in their talent pipeline, they “might be more capable of selecting, altering, and implementing their other resources to meet stressful demands” (Hobfoll, 2002, p.308), and consequently, accomplish better performance, psychological outcomes, and goal-directed behaviours. The basic tenets/corollaries of this theory will be discussed in detail in chapter 4.

Concerning the operationalisation of PsyCap, the original scale has been developed and tested for 3 components (resilience, optimism, and hope) in an exploratory study among workers in the Chinese context (Luthans, Avolio, Walumbwa, and Li, 2005). In a subsequent study in the American context, the final scale of the 4 components has been empirically validated among

two samples using 24-items, allocated as 6-items per each of the 4 subdimensions, and the results of the CFA modelled PsyCap as a second-order construct<sup>24</sup> (Luthans et al., 2007).

Despite being a second-order construct as confirmed in the domestic literature, it did not consider the transient nature of the construct from one culture to another. Therefore, due to the specificity nature of PsyCap, Yunlu and Clapp-Smith (2014) amplified the necessity of developing a measure of PsyCap to fit individuals working in the international/cross-cultural context. They named it cultural PsyCap and their study resulted in a reliable and valid measure consisting of 16-items adapted from the original scale by Luthans et al. (2007). Similarly, the study by Dollwet and Reichard (2014) addresses the importance of developing a scale comprising a package of general CC-PsyCap skills that are contemplated to be significant for building relationships, coping with stress, and adjusting to new situations, which eventually lead to successful interactions in the international domain. In particular, they named it “cross-cultural PsyCap” to make it distinguishable from the traditional/domestic PsyCap. Their scale was composed of 20 items for the 4 subdimensions: “cross-cultural hope, cross-cultural self-efficacy, cross-cultural optimism, and cross-cultural resilience.” This 20-items scale has also been cross-validated among two samples (US and South Africa) in the study by Reichard et al. (2014). Each of the 4 subcomponents of CC-PsyCap is elaborated in the following subsection.

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<sup>24</sup> The reliability and validity of this measure of PsyCap has been examined in different national cultures, such as Australia (Avey, Nimnicht, Pigeon, 2010b), India (Gupta and Singh, 2013), Iran (Darvishmotevali and Ali, 2020) China (Luthans, Avey, Clapp-Smith, and Li, 2008b), New Zealand (Woolley, Caza, and Levy, 2011), and Egypt (Badran and Youssef, 2015). The previous long inventory of PsyCap has been minimised to a shortened version measure, encompassing 12-items (3-items per each of the 4 subcomponents) in the Chinese context (Luthans et al., 2008b). This short version has also been examined across 12 national cultures and the results stipulated the hierarchical structure of PsyCap as higher-order construct (Wernsing, 2014). Noteworthy to outline that both versions were operationalised at the individual level.

## **2.6.2. The Subdimensions of Cross-Cultural PsyCap**

### **2.6.2.1. Cross-Cultural Self-Efficacy**

Self-efficacy is embedded into the social cognitive theory (Bandura, 2001). It refers to the degree of confidence a person has in his/her abilities to gather the cognitive resources and motivation required to efficiently carry out a specific task (Stajkovic and Luthans, 1998). In the cross-cultural context, Dollwet and Reichard (2014) argue that high cross-cultural self-efficacious individuals have the confidence to successfully interact with individuals from other cultures. Also, such individuals are equipped with skills required for effective functioning in a highly diversified work setting.

### **2.6.2.2. Cross-Cultural Hope**

According to Snyder (2002), hope is composed of two complementary components: “willpower” and “pathways.” The first dimension requires individuals to apply motivation to accomplish desired goals. The second one contends with individuals’ ability to think about alternative routes toward this goal even faced by impediments. Thus, hopeful employees have the persistence to alter strategies via feedback when goals are not accomplished. They have the requisite energy to create different pathways to navigate adversity (Rego, Sousa, Marques, and Cunha, 2012). In the cross-cultural domain, hopeful employees are expected to set and achieve goals connected with individuals in different cultures and are capable of developing several pathways to solve any problems faced when interacting with individuals from a variety of cultural backgrounds (Dollwet and Reichard, 2014).

### **2.6.2.3. Cross-Cultural Optimism**

The third component is optimism that is cast as an attributional style of positive and negative situations. Specifically, optimists hold a positive outlook and ascribe positive events to personal causes and negative events to external factors (Seligman, 2006). However, it is claimed that optimism should be subject to realistic evaluation (Schneider, 2001) that should evaluate what can and cannot be accomplished in a particular event (Luthans et al., 2007). Rego et al. (2012) outline that optimists tend to preclude themselves from negative circumstances, and therefore, are less likely to get self-blamed, despaired, and depressed. Moreover, optimistic individuals view relapse as a chance for improvement and ultimate success (Luthans et al., 2005). Carver and Scheier (2002) allege that optimistic individuals always have positive expectations and tend to see the future as bright, as this stimulates them to pursue their goals. Whilst, pessimistic individuals are vulnerable to negative expectations and self-doubts.

In the international context, optimism is crucial for employees working abroad because it enables them to overcome uncertainty/ambiguity and learn from mistakes. In addition, high cross-cultural optimists may trace successful interactions back to their effective skills of negotiation and communications. However, if unfavourable interactions occurred due to miscommunication, they would ascribe such difficulty to the situation (Dollwet and Reichard, 2014).

### **2.6.2.4. Cross-Cultural Resilience**

Resilience is defined as “the capacity to rebound or bounce back from adversity, conflict, failure, or even positive events, progress, and increased responsibility (Luthans, 2002b, p.702). Resilience allows individuals to function through minimising risk factors and reinforcing the



assets within individuals and the surrounding environment (Luthans and Youssef, 2004). Resilient employees are open to new experiences acquisition and feel energised (Tugade, Fredrickson, and Barrett, 2004). They also have the capacity to override negative experiences and approach positive experiences during stressful events (Rego et al., 2012). Thus, resilience is viewed as a chance for growth, learning, and development (Luthans and Youssef, 2007).

Dollwet and Reichard (2014) expect that cross-cultural resilience will be an important psychological resource in the international/cross-cultural context because it will increase employees' adjustment to negative situations and improve their interactions with colleagues from different cultures through seeking mentors for advice when acting inappropriately, and enhance their performance when encountering adversity to be proactive. Therefore, they tend to be proactive learners in such stressful situations.

Despite the importance shown for each individual subcomponent<sup>25</sup> that forms the grounds of the core concept of CC-PsyCap, Luthans et al. (2007) recommended examining PsyCap as a whole construct due to its potent predictiveness on work outcomes, which exceeded its individual subdimensions. Therefore, the next section reviews prior studies on only the overall PsyCap.

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<sup>25</sup> As mentioned before, these 4 components are open for development, for more details on how each of them can be developed and some prior research on the impact of each individual component on work-outcomes, please see section (H) of the OA of chapter (2) at: [Press here](#)

### **2.6.3. Prior Studies on the Antecedents and Outcomes of CC-PsyCap**

A set of (68) articles has undergone categorisation and coding for common themes unfolding purposes. In doing so, the review and analysis resulted in generating the following generic themes:

#### **2.6.3.1. Antecedents-PsyCap-Work Outcomes in the Domestic Context**

In the POB research, the crux of previous studies focuses on identifying the factors that contribute to or thwart the formation of PsyCap. Understanding the antecedents of PsyCap is essential because it allows organisations to consider designing the workplace climate in the way that promotes employees' PsyCap (Newman et al., 2014). Research has identified some contextual resources that reside within the organisations, which are necessary for flourishing employees' PsyCap, which in turn, leads to favourable outcomes. Such contextual factors include supportive climate, diversity climate, workplace fun, socialisation mechanisms (e.g., satisfaction with buddying), organisational (procedural and distributive) justice, training interventions, and high-performance work systems (HPWS). All the previous organisational factors have been found to develop employees' PsyCap, which subsequently results in improving performance, work engagement, emotional labour, satisfaction and commitment, and career success, and reducing turnover intentions (Luthans, Norman, Avolio, and Avey, 2008a; Luthans, Avey, and Patera, 2008c; Luthans, Avey, Avolio, and Peterson, 2010; Nigah, Davis, and Hurrell, 2012; Tsaur, Hsu, and Li, 2019; Newman, Nielsen, Smyth, Hirst, and Kennedy, 2018; Hur, Rhee, and Ahn, 2016; Miao, Bozionelos, Zhou, and Newman, 2021).

Another line of inquiry focused on the role of different leadership styles as key influencers of employees' PsyCap, which in turn, impacted individuals' outcomes. For example, authentic

leadership was found to be significantly associated with subordinates' PsyCap (Woolley et al., 2011; Avey, 2014). Rego et al. (2012) found that authentic leadership reinforced employees' creativity by means of employees' PsyCap. In addition, transformational leadership was also found to be effective in positively promoting employees' PsyCap, which in turn led to in-role performance and citizenship behaviours (Gooty, Gavin, Johnson, Frazier, and Snow, 2009). More recently, servant leadership was found to be positively related to employees' PsyCap and job engagement as sequential mediators, which resulted in achieving better service performance (Chen and Peng, 2021). Another study uncovered that servant leadership promoted employees' PsyCap by means of person-supervisor fit and person-group fit (Safavi and Bouzari, 2020). Moreover, Gupta and Singh (2014) unveiled that R&D leaders who displayed favourable behaviours (e.g., empowering, recognising, oriented, team-building, and inspiring) were more likely to enhance their subordinates' PsyCap, which in turn, was conducive to creative performance (idea generation, problem identification, idea promotion, and information search).

Another stream of studies focused on the transferability of leaders' PsyCap (at the group/team level) to their subordinates (at the individual level). Results showed that leaders' PsyCap was a contagion that could be either directly transmitted to promote their follower's PsyCap, and subsequently led to followers' engagement and better performance (Walumbwa, Avolio, and Hartnell, 2010, Chen, 2015) or indirectly via the mediating effect of the quality of relationships between leaders and followers (Story Youssef, Luthans, Barbuto, and Bovaird, 2013). Despite the previous beneficial impact of leadership styles and behaviours on the development of employees' PsyCap, some scholars shed a spotlight on the dark side of leadership by focusing on the role of abusive supervision. For instance, Avey (2014) reported a direct negative but

non-significant relationship between abusive supervision and employees' PsyCap. Meanwhile, other recent studies found that employees' PsyCap mediated the relationship between abusive supervision and work outcomes, such as stress and intention to quit (Agarwal, 2019), and citizenship behaviours (Ahmad, Athar, Azam, Hamstra, and Hanif, 2019).

Besides all the previous organisational factors, PsyCap formation was also been linked to personal factors. For instance, Avey (2014) investigated the role of individual differences in PsyCap development, and the results unfolded that both self-esteem and proactive personality had a significant positive impact on employees' PsyCap. Additionally, ethnic identity was found to have a positive association with PsyCap, particularly for those working in a diverse workforce, which in turn, fostered job attributes concerning competence and growth (Combs et al., 2012). Gender role orientation was also found to have a significant positive effect on employees' PsyCap, which in turn, positively influenced their career success, particularly for masculinity more than femininity (Ngo, Foley, Ji, and Loi, 2013).

### **2.6.3.2. PsyCap- Mediators-Work Outcomes in the Domestic Context**

A growing bundle of studies has provided evidence for PsyCap's optimal direct and indirect predictiveness on work outcomes that are classified into three main streams:

The first line of inquiry captured significant associations between PsyCap and favourable attitudes, encompassing: (1) well-being either directly (Avey, Luthans, Smith, and Palmer, 2010a) or indirectly through reducing stress (Baron et al., 2016), and positive emotions and stress as sequential mediators (Avey, Wernsing, and Mhatre, 2011b); (2) engagement (Avey, Wernsing, and Luthans, 2008); (3) job satisfaction (Badran and Youssef, 2015); (4) organisational commitment and satisfaction via the mediating effect of work engagement

(Paek, Schuckert, Kim, and Lee, 2015), and (5) job commitment through the positive effect of work engagement, workplace happiness, and job satisfaction (Wen and Liu-Lastres, 2021). In addition to the previous positive outcomes promoted by PsyCap, some unfavourable work outcomes were also found to be alleviated by PsyCap, including job stress, intention to quit/turn over intentions, and cynicism, with the latter either directly or indirectly through positive emotions (Avey, Luthans, and Youssef, 2010c; Avey et al., 2009; Avey et al., 2008; Baron et al., 2016). Some studies found the effect of PsyCap on turnover intentions to be transmitted by means of some mediators, such as quality of work-life (Kim, Karatype, Lee, Lee, Hur, and Xijing, 2017), work-family and family-work conflicts (Karatepe and Karadas, 2014), and engagement (Kang and Busser, 2018).

The second stream of studies placed an emphasis on PsyCap-employees' behaviours linkage, and the findings showed that employees having high PsyCap were less likely to demonstrate unfavourable behaviours, such as deviance, job search behaviour, and voluntary and involuntary absenteeism. Such individuals were also found to display favourable behaviours, such as organisational citizenship behaviour (Avey et al., 2008; Norman, Avey, Nimnicht, and Pigeon, 2010; Avey et al., 2009; Avey, Patera, and West, 2006), job crafting behaviour, which in turn, contributed to career success in terms of satisfaction and promotion (Cenciotti, Alessandri, Borgogni, 2017), and the agentic behaviour of task focus, which in turn, led to thriving (Paterson et al., 2014).

The third strand of studies addressed the PsyCap-performance relationship, in which there existed a general consensus that high levels of PsyCap led to a surge in employees job performance, creative performance, financial performance, and innovative performance (Clapp-Smith, Vogelgesang, and Avey, 2009; Luthans et al., 2005; Luthans et al., 2008b,

Luthans et al., 2007; Avey et al., 2010b; Avey et al., 2010c; Abbas and Raja, 2015, Rego, Marques, Leal, Sousa, and Cunha, 2010; Sweetman, Luthans, Avey, and Luthans, 2011). Potent support was provided to the majority of the previous outcomes of PsyCap in the meta-analysis by Avey et al. (2011a). In addition, Choi and Lee (2014) inspected the predictive validity of PsyCap to assess its role in relation to work outcomes when controlling for the big five personality traits, and their findings unveiled that PsyCap remained to have a significant impact on employees' well-being, happiness, turnover, and performance.

Other outcomes of PsyCap were also verified, such as career adaptability (Safavi and Bouzari, 2019), mental health improvements (Krasikova, Lester, and Harms, 2019), perceived employability, which subsequently resulted in problem-focused coping strategy and active job search (Chen and Lim, 2012), and positive affective delivery through the mediating influence of emotional demands-abilities fit (Hwang and Han, 2019).

Although the previous work was dominated by quantitative studies, two qualitative studies were captured in this review on PsyCap. One study highlighted that PsyCap ignited coping mechanisms that were conceived to be crucial for increasing the awareness of managers and owners of small tourism companies regarding the alternations of the interior and exterior business environment, thereby building business resilience (Fang, Prayag, Ozanne, and Vried, 2020). The other study discussed five case studies, in which PsyCap was found to be essential for employees' engagement (Thompson, Lemmon, and Walter, 2015).

### **2.6.3.3. PsyCap as a Moderator in the Domestic Context**

Despite the previous voluminous work on PsyCap and its optimal predictiveness on numerous work outcomes, some few studies devoted attention to its boundary condition role when interacting with some predictors to impact employees' outcomes. For example, Roberts, Scherer, and Bowyer (2011) found that PsyCap weakened the positive effect of job stress on incivility for high PsyCap individuals. Another study by Darvishmotevali and Ali (2018) uncovered that high PsyCap employees were adept at coping with the negative effect of job insecurity on their well-being. In addition, Abbas, Raja, Darr, and Bouckenoghe (2014) found that high levels of PsyCap dampened the negative association between organisational politics and employees' satisfaction and performance. Also, the interaction effect of PsyCap was found to be significant in the relationship between emotional labour and job burnout and satisfaction (Cheung, Tang, and Tango, 2011). Recent research concluded that PsyCap was a significant moderator for the association between perceived threats of terrorism and subordinates' performance, emotional exhaustion, and stress (Raja, Azeem, Haq, and Nasser, 2020). Moreover, the positive association between authoritarian leadership style and fear was found to be strengthened for employees with low PsyCap (Guo, Decoster, Babalola, Schutter, Garba, and Riisla, 2018). Another study by Nawaz et al. (2020) unfolded that both high and low PsyCap employees were less sensitive to the negative effect of workplace incivility and thriving. For female entrepreneurs, PsyCap was found to intensify the positive influence of entrepreneurial empowerment on firms' revenues (Digan, Sabi, Mantok, and Patel, 2019).

Another strand of studies diagnosed the moderating influence of PsyCap in the linkage between challenge and hindrance stressors and employees' outcomes. Specifically, the results of Khelifat, Chen, Ayoun, and Eyoun's (2021) study demonstrated that PsyCap dampened the

mischievous influence of both challenge and hindrance stressors on employees' citizenship behaviours. Similarly, Min, Kim, and Lee (2015) outlined that the positive influences of challenge and hindrance stressors on burnout were weakened for high PsyCap employees. However, they found that the negative association between hindrance stressors and engagement was not moderated by PsyCap.

#### **2.6.3.4. PsyCap in the Cross-Cultural Context**

Some scholars support the importance of PsyCap for global leaders because it is found that it reinforces their global competencies in terms of performance, inquisitiveness, and nonjudgmentalness (Vogelgesang, Clapp-Smith, and Osland, 2014). PsyCap is also important in contemporary organisations characterised by a diversified workplace that entails possessing generalizable skills by employees to interact effectively in multicultural workplaces even they will not work on international assignments. This insinuates that PsyCap is important to be fostered for expatriates and domestic employees. For this reason, as previously mentioned, two scholarly attempts have been conducted to develop a CC-PsyCap scale (see Yunlu and Clapp-Smith, 2014; Dollwet and Reichard, 2014) that was premised on the original one developed by Luthans et al. (2007); however, it was adapted/modified to fit employees working in global work settings. This new scale's predictive, convergent, and discriminant validity has been confirmed. The study by Yunlu and Clapp-Smith (2014) found that cultural PsyCap significantly fostered motivational cultural intelligence, which subsequently increased metacognitive awareness. Also, the findings of Dollwet and Reichard's (2014) study unfolded that CC-PsyCap minimised ethnocentrism, and improved cross-cultural adjustment, openness for experience, and cultural intelligence. In a subsequent study, the scale developed by Dollwet and Reichard (2014) was utilised by Reichard et al. (2014), who endeavoured to investigate the



impact of CC-PsyCap training on employees' self-reported PsyCap, cultural intelligence, ethnocentrism, and positive emotions. Results revealed that CC-PsyCap training achieved significant gains in the four psychological ingredients of CC-PsyCap, positively enhanced cultural intelligence and positive emotions, and minimised ethnocentrism. However, the most common drawback existing in the empirical aspect in the previous three studies was that their respondents were not a specific cohort of expatriates on assignments, as they just targeted people who had cultural/international experience by virtue of traveling and living outside their country of citizenship for a period of time.

In the next section, the focus is shifted to discuss the literature review related to expatriates' willingness to share knowledge.

## **2.7. Expatriates' Willingness of Tacit Knowledge Sharing/Transfer**

The topic of knowledge transfer (KT) has a prominent pedigree in the IB literature. It is widely acknowledged that knowledge transfer is one of the primary motives for sending expatriates on international assignments (Bonache and Brewster, 2001). Expatriates' motivation to transfer intricate forms of knowledge (i.e., tacit) maintains their role strategically important (Chang and Smale, 2013), particularly for developing countries like Egypt. According to Gupta and Govindarajan (2000), when foreign subsidiaries are located in less developed countries (i.e., Egypt) compared to the home country of MNCs (i.e., Western countries), more knowledge is expected to be transferred from MNCs to foreign subsidiaries. Therefore, expatriates' role in knowledge transfer is relevant and important to be examined in the Egyptian context.

### **2.7.1. Definitions of Knowledge and Knowledge Sharing/Transfer (KS/KT).**

Before embarking on the conceptualisation of KT, knowledge is ought to be defined. Davenport and Prusak (1998, p.85) define knowledge as “a fluid mix of framed experience, values, contextual information, and expert insight that provides a framework for evaluating and incorporating new experiences and information. It originates and is applied in the minds of knowers. In organizations, it often becomes embedded not only in documents or repositories but also in organizational routines, processes, practices, and norms.” According to Nooderhaven and Harzing (2009), the previous definition insinuates that organisations should consider the fact that knowledge may take two forms, namely explicit (codified) and tacit (uncodified) knowledge. Research distinguishes between them, viewing the former to be pronounced, simply codified, seamlessly communicated/transmitted via written documents, universal, and accessible via consciousness, and the latter to be entrenched in individuals’ mind, senses, experience, gut, movement skills, and cannot exist without application (Nonaka and Krogh, 2009). Tacit-knowledge seems to be more complicated in transmission compared to the explicit one (Kalling, 2003). Accordingly, some scholars propose that the more the tacitness of knowledge in nature, the greater the need for both international assignments and expatriates to transfer knowledge from the home to the host country (Bonache and Brewster, 2001; Bonache and Za’rraga-Oberty, 2008).

In the organisational context, Kalling (2003, p.116) conceptualised KT as “the process by which members within organisations learn from each other, without interacting with the environment.” Despite being resided at the individual level, the organisational knowledge transfer problem overrides the individual level to comprise other levels of analysis, such as groups, divisions, or departments. For instance, KT connotes “the process through which one

unit (e.g., group, department, or division) is affected by the experience of another” (Argote and Ingram, 2000, p.151). Additionally, Darr and Kurtzberg (2002) conceived it as a learning event when one firm learns from another firm’s experience. According to Argote et al. (2000), knowledge can be transferred via multiple mechanisms, encompassing training, personal movement, technology transfer, observation, replicating routines, interactions with suppliers and customers, scientific publications, alliances, and different forms or inter-organisational relationships.

Remarkably, most of the aforementioned definitions considered KT as a process. In this essence, Szulanski (2000) contemplates KT as a multi-stages process, each of which has its own stickiness (difficulty), including: initiation, implementation, ramp up, and integration. Initiation includes all events affecting the decision to transfer, as the process starts when a gap exists and an opportunity to transfer knowledge is available to bridge this gap within the organisation. Implementation occurs when a decision is made to proceed. Within this stage, knowledge is transferred from the source to the recipient. Additionally, social ties begin to be established between both parties and the transferred knowledge is often modified to fit the expected needs of the recipient. During this stage, the major challenge is to bridge the communication void between the transferor and the recipient and bridge the latter’s technical gap. Communication gaps may exist from language incompatibility, coding mechanisms, and cultural traditions. The phase of ramp-up commences when the recipient begins to use the transferred knowledge. Finally, the integration phase starts when the recipient accomplishes superior results with this new knowledge. Afterwards, the frequent usage of this transferred knowledge will incrementally routinise it. The challenge of the final stage is that many efforts

are required to obliterate hindrances and confront the challenges of routinizing this new knowledge (Szulanski, 1996; Szulanski, 2000).

### **2.7.2. The Conceptual Distinction between KT and Other-related Constructs**

Researchers distinguish between KT and other-related constructs. Technology transfer, for example, is another widely employed construct in the literature. It connotes “the movement of know-how, technical knowledge, or technology from one organisation to another” (Bozeman, 2000, p.629). According to Gopalakrishnan and Santoro (2004, p.57), it is articulated that although both technology and knowledge transfer are highly interactive activities, they provide different objectives. More specifically, they state that “knowledge transfer implies a broader, more inclusive construct that is directed more toward understanding the "whys" for change. In contrast, technology transfer is a narrower and more targeted construct that usually embodies certain tools for changing the environment.”

Knowledge “encapsulation” is another term used by some researchers, referring to “a routinized process of encoding, storing, and converting knowledge into a retrievable and sharable form” (Zhao and Lou, 2005, p.79). Finally, the term “diffusion” is often attached to knowledge in some scholarly research (see Kamoche and Harvey, 2006). However, Szulaski (1996) elevates the preference for using the term “transfer” instead of “diffusion” to stipulate that knowledge movement within MNCs is a distinguished experience, not an incremental activity of dissemination, and is contingent on the characteristics of the individuals engaged in this activity.

Some scholars highlight that the mobilisation of knowledge within MNCs may hold different concepts. One example is the broad interchangeable use of both KT and knowledge sharing

(KS) in IB research (Makela, 2007). However, both concepts are quite discernible. The former term typically denotes a formally planned activity within certain boundaries (Szulanski, 2000). Whilst, KS contends with “a wider range of knowledge exchanges in interpersonal and organisational interaction” (Makela, 2007, p.111). Conventionally, KT can take either an inward or an outward form. The outward form occurs when a specific set of skills and knowledge are transferred by an expatriate during the international assignment, whereas the inward form takes place when an expatriate reversely transfers the newly acquired skills and knowledge to the home country upon repatriation (Makela, 2007).

The present study adopts knowledge sharing as a term because of its wider scope and focus on the outward form that deals with the knowledge that expatriates share with local colleagues during their international assignments. Research suggests that the amount of knowledge transferred to subsidiaries is driven by expatriates’ ability and willingness to share knowledge, and both factors are impacted by the duration of assignments. That is long-term assignment is a major determinant of the willingness aspect, whereas short-term assignment is a determinant of the ability aspect (Minbaeva and Michailova, 2004). Moreover, the willingness/motivation dimension was found to be a significant factor for expatriate effectiveness (Chen et al., 2010). This implies that the willingness aspect is more important for expatriates on long-term assignments, which is consistent with the present study’s focus. Hence, in alignment with prior scholars’ work on knowledge sharing willingness (e.g., Jiacheng et al., 2010; Chang et al., 2012b), the present study defines expatriate’s willingness to share tacit-knowledge as the degree of expatriate’s inclination or readiness to allocate time and exert efforts to share tacit-knowledge with local colleagues in the host country. Also, it is noteworthy to reiterate that willingness is adopted as a proxy of the actual behaviour of knowledge sharing.

### **2.7.3. The Theoretical Underpinnings of KT/KS**

A review of the literature demonstrates that the majority of studies utilise the “resource-based view” introduced by (Wernerfelt, 1984) as a theoretical platform. According to this perspective, companies are expected to achieve superior performance and competitive advantage compared to other rivals when they possess distinctive resources (i.e., knowledge) and capabilities (Johnson et al., 2011). Knowledge, in this essence, is regarded as a resource.

Other scholarly research addresses KT from the “knowledge-based perspective” (see Santor and Bierly, 2006). Alavi and Leinder (2001) argue that this perspective is an extension of the resource-based theory of firm. This perspective postulates that knowledge is rooted and transferred via multiple channels, such as organisational culture, policies, routines, documents, and employees. It also considers knowledge as a resource that is difficult to be imitated. Thus, knowledge may effectuate sustainable competitive advantage (Alavi and Leidner, 2001). Moreover, this perspective considers companies as a social society where knowledge is stored and transmitted internally rather than via external markets (Williams and Lee, 2016).

Another line of inquiry draws on the “theory of planned behaviour/reasoned action” (Ajzen, 1991) in studying knowledge-sharing behaviour (see Lin et al., 2012; Gagne, 2009; Jiacheng et al., 2010). This theory assumes that actual behaviours are influenced by individuals’ intentions as motivational factors. Such intentions are impacted by three factors: (1) behavioural attitudes (i.e., evaluation of the behaviour whether being favourable or not); (2) social attitudes (i.e., social pressures to do the behaviour or not); and (3) control beliefs (i.e., whether a person possesses adequate competencies to perform the behaviour).

Another growing bulk of studies adopts the “social capital theory” and stresses the significant spinoff of social capital in KT (see Kostova and Roth, 2003; Inkpen and Tsang, 2005; Makela et al., 2009; Inkpen and Tsang, 2016). Social capital (SC) is conceptualised as “the sum of the actual and potential resources embedded within, available through, and derived from the network of relationships possessed by an individual or social unit” (Nahapiet and Ghoshal, 1998, p.243). The central tenet of SC is that it provides the members of a social network with valuable resources for social affairs conduct (Nahapiet and Ghoshal, 1998). Therefore, this theory has been widely employed as a useful lens to explain KT, given the fact that KT<sup>26</sup> is a dyadic process in which one is influenced by another’s experience.

#### **2.7.4. A Review of Prior Studies on the Antecedents of Knowledge Sharing/Transfer**

As willingness to share/transfer knowledge is one of the final outcomes in the current study, this section reviews and discusses the predictors of the willingness of knowledge sharing. In particular, it presents the factors facilitating or hampering knowledge sharing. A review of (80) articles resulted in the emergence of the following themes:

##### **2.7.4.1. Knowledge Characteristics and Knowledge Sharing/Transfer**

A voluminous amount of research indicated that some knowledge-related features impinge on KT. The explicit versus tacit dichotomy has been widely examined in the KT literature. For

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<sup>26</sup> With respect to the level of transfer, Wilkesmann et al. (2009, p.465) claim that “KT can be distinguished between an individual, an intra-organisational, and an inter-organisational level.” At the individual level, knowledge is transferred by an individual to affect another’s experience. Intra-organisational denotes the transfer of knowledge between divisions within the organisation, whereas inter-organisational level refers to the transfer of knowledge between organisations. Noticeably, whatever the level of KT, individuals (organisational members) are involved in the process.

instance, Nonaka and Krogh (2009) articulated that knowledge conversion might lead to the development of tacit and explicit knowledge at the individual level and KS at the team level. Recent research construed how the effectiveness of KT modes was influenced by causal ambiguous knowledge and the timing of using the mode (Szulanski et al., 2016). The findings showed that the affordances of tacit-knowledge exchange by “front-loading” mode alleviated the stickiness of transfer when both knowledge’s causal ambiguity was high and contributed to the stickiness when the source-recipient relationship was laborious.

Another examined property of knowledge linked to KS is the degree of articulation. It is claimed that the more the codifiability and articulation of knowledge, the easier and smoother its documentation and transferability (Zander and Kogut, 1995; Renzl, 2008). Other commentators examine the influence of the complexity characteristic on knowledge flow (Soreson et al., 2006). The results demonstrate that complex knowledge adversely influences knowledge transmission even within the social network (source of emergence). Furthermore, Bou-Llusar and Segarra-Cupres (2006) suggest that the degree of knowledge specificity can serve as a source of causal ambiguity that is considered a key feature of strategic resources. Additionally, the transfer of systematic knowledge entails establishing good relationships between the sources and the recipients. Therefore, they propose that when the transferred knowledge is more tacit, complex, specific, and systematic, it may be more difficult for firms to transfer internal strategic knowledge.

In the expatriation context, one qualitative study by Ruisala and Suutari (2004) developed a theoretical framework incorporating the different factors impeding KT through expatriates. Knowledge characteristics were one of the explored factors, including the dimensions of “tacitness, codification, teach-ability, and complexity”. Results revealed that codifiability and the



high tacit nature of the transferred knowledge were the most common stickiness factors. Whilst, teach-ability and complexity were not salient stickiness factors among the sample, tracing this result to the appropriate nature of expatriation role to transfer knowledge so that expatriates could transfer complicated knowledge without much difficulty. However, some of the previous results seemed to be somewhat inconsistent with a later quantitative study by Ruisala and Smale (2007), who empirically examined the predictive power of some knowledge characteristics (e.g., complexity, teach-ability, and codifiability)<sup>27</sup> on transferring knowledge internationally. The findings unveiled that teach-ability was an inverse significant antecedent of difficulty experienced by expatriates in transferring knowledge to local hosts. Moreover, complexity was positively associated with transferring knowledge. Finally, codifiability had no significant effect on KT. A more recent study unfolded that knowledge complexity, specificity, and tacitness significantly hindered expatriates' KS (Wu et al., 2021).

Another strand of research documented the importance of knowledge characteristics for KT at the intra-organisational level. For instance, Lindsay et al. (2003) theoretically suggest that the value of knowledge stock is important for KT between both parent company and subsidiaries. In addition, Roth et al. (2009) suggest that the nature of knowledge (tacit/explicit) may affect the use of knowledge in foreign subsidiaries. Supportive empirical evidence highlighted that knowledge characteristics (difficulty, tacit-ness, and importance of knowledge) had a positive influence on the efforts exerted by organisations to transfer knowledge. Other accounts empirically demonstrated that non-substitutable, rare, and valuable knowledge fostered the

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<sup>27</sup> Noteworthy is to define both teach-ability and codifiability concepts. The former deals with the degree of difficulty experienced in delivering knowledge to a new recipient. The latter reflects the overt articulation of knowledge in a document (Ruisala and Smale, 2007).

attractiveness of the source, which in turn, maximised KT effectiveness (Perez-Nordtvedt et al., 2008). Finally, in her study on the factors affecting best practices transfer, Szulanski (1996) emphasised that causal ambiguity of knowledge was a major impediment to knowledge transfer<sup>28</sup>.

#### **2.7.4.2. Source Characteristics and Knowledge Sharing/Transfer**

Extant domestic literature suggests that the characteristics of the source of knowledge are crucial for KT. In particular, knowledge-providers' motivation and capabilities are the cornerstones of KT effectiveness. For example, Cabrera and Cabrera (2005) discuss some socio-psychological factors that may contribute to KS dynamics. Specifically, they argue that individuals holding positive attitudes toward sharing knowledge are more likely to demonstrate strong intentions and behaviours to share knowledge. They further identify some factors that foster individuals' positive behaviours, such as rewards, group identification, and self-efficacy. Moreover, Watson and Hewett (2006) hypothesise that the effectiveness of KT between individuals within the company hinges on the extent to which individuals' willingness to contribute their knowledge and that the trust in the knowledge source is important for the frequent reuse of knowledge. In addition, it is found that the possession of a good reputation and credibility by the knowledge provider has a positive effect on KT (Locus, 2005; Locus and Ogilvie, 2006; Ko et al., 2005). Knowledge provider's expertise is also of great importance, as

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<sup>28</sup> Similarly, the features of knowledge still do matter for KT in different forms of IB at the inter-organisational level in the acquisition, alliances, and franchise contexts (see Khamseh and Jolly, 2008; Casal and Fontela, 2007; Zou and Ghauri, 2008; Gorovaia and Windsperger, 2010).

when the knowledge recipient perceives the provider as experienced, this may positively affect KT (Kang and Kim, 2010).

On the other hand, some scholars postulate that there exist some characteristics that make knowledge sender hostile to share knowledge with others within organisations, such as fear of losing value and power, fear of recipients' criticism of his knowledge quality, uncertainty regarding the way the recipients will interpret this shared knowledge (Minbaeva and Michailova, 2004), fear of losing job, low self-awareness of personal knowledge importance to others, perceptions of KS as extra work, the lack of time, poor interpersonal and communication skills, the lack of social network, and perceptions of differences in experience levels, education levels, ages, and national cultures (Reige, 2007).

In the MNCs' context, the social influence theory was employed to explain an individual's knowledge-sharing behaviour. More specifically, Boh and Wong (2015) argue that unit managers are key social referents used by individual employees within the unit. When unit managers possess influential leadership skills and demonstrate their proactive behaviour of knowledge sharing, employees may be enthusiastic to assimilate this model signalled by their leaders and are more likely to get engaged in KS as normative behaviour. This previous argument has been empirically supported.

In the expatriation literature, the role of expatriates in KT can be bifurcated into two streams: KT from subsidiaries to parent companies and from parent companies to foreign subsidiaries. However, expatriates' characteristics required in both contexts are almost homogeneous. For example, Chang et al. (2012b) confirmed that expatriates' competencies (ability, motivation, and opportunity-seeking for KT) had a significant influence on subsidiaries' performance via the knowledge transferred to subsidiaries, and this indirect relationship was fostered when

subsidiaries had greater absorptive capacity. Furthermore, Chang and Smale (2013) identified some expatriates' characteristics that might impact the stickiness of transferring the HRM knowledge. Their findings explicated that expatriates' motivation and ability (absorptive and disseminative capacity) had an impact on the HRM knowledge transfer. Additionally, Wang et al. (2009) stipulated that expatriates' motivation, technical skills, and adaptability had a positive influence on KT, which in turn, enhanced subsidiaries' performance.

Likewise, Bonache and Zarrage-Oberty (2008) hypothesised that the interaction between expatriates' motivation and ability might maximise the level of knowledge transmitted to local hosts. Their study also provided some propositions for HR initiatives in order to ameliorate the ability and motivation of both expatriates and local hosts. Nevertheless, other scholars found that expatriates' ability to transfer knowledge had strong predictive power on the degree of KT; however, expatriates' willingness was not significant (Minbaeva and Michailova, 2004). More interestingly, the previous authors demonstrated that the type of international assignment might affect expatriates' ability and willingness to share knowledge. That is long-term assignments reinforced expatriates' willingness to share knowledge, whereas temporary assignments (short-term, international commuters, and frequent flyers) positively predicted their ability to share knowledge. Hence, these inconsistent findings regarding expatriates' willingness to share knowledge need more attention in future research.

Furthermore, Choi and Johanson (2012) examined the impact of expatriates' business and country knowledge and development skills on their success in KT. The results indicated that expatriates' personal relationship development skills were positively related to KT, whereas their business and country experience had no significant effect. A conceptual study by Gonzalez and Chakraborty (2014) outline that expatriates' task-related competencies

(technical, managerial skills, and ability), intercultural competencies (cultural intelligence, language fluency, and prior international experience), motivation, and adjustment are positively related to KT in the foreign affiliates<sup>29</sup>

Moving beyond the knowledge disseminator's ability and motivation, Caligiuri (2014) alluded to the importance of the big five personality (immutable) traits for effective knowledge sharing; however, this suggestion has not been empirically tested. Other accounts examined the effect of goal-oriented personalities on KS, and the results found that KS was positively impacted by goal-oriented personality and negatively impacted by performance-oriented personality (Matzler and Mueller, 2011). Additionally, recent research found that knowledge sharing was facilitated when expatriates possessed high levels of cultural intelligence (Vlajčić et al., 2019).

#### **2.7.4.3. Recipient Characteristics and Knowledge Sharing/Transfer**

It is also acknowledged that the recipient's characteristics are conceived to be critical for KT success as well. Numerous characteristics should be possessed by knowledge receivers. However, absorptive capacity has gained increasing, prominent, and extensive attention in the KT literature at both the individual and organisational levels (Wijk et al., 2008). It is conceptualised and operationalized as a single construct that contends with the ability to identify and recognise, understand and process, combine, and apply external knowledge (Chang et al., 2012b). According to Locus (2005), KT is enhanced when the knowledge receiver is characterised by a good reputation. Similarly, Bonache and Zarraga-Oberty (2008) postulate that the integration between local host's motivation and ability may boost the level

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<sup>29</sup> Similarly, the importance of the source's characteristics is well-acknowledged in the KT literature at the organisational level (see Gupta and Govindarajan, 2000; Kalling, 2003; Mu et al., 2010).

of KT to the recipient unit. Consistently, Ko et al. (2005) suggest that absorptive capacity constringes the hindrances of KT.

According to Minbaeva et al. (2003), absorptive capacity is manifested in the knowledge receiver's motivation and ability to absorb new knowledge, and both components facilitate KT. However, Song (2014) recently suggests that motivation should be considered as a separate construct, and it can act as a moderator for the relationship between absorptive capacity and KT within MNCs instead of being treated as one aspect of absorptive capacity. Moreover, Gupta and Govindarajan (2000) suggest that inward knowledge flow within the subsidiary is more likely to be positively affected by the subsidiary's absorptive capacity of the inflowing knowledge. Recent studies support the importance of absorptive capacity in minimising the knowledge gap between the parent company and foreign subsidiaries (Fang and Bang, 2016). Furthermore, Chang et al. (2012b) captured a moderating effect of subsidiary absorptive capacity on the relationship between expatriates' ability, motivation, and opportunity-seeking, and knowledge received by subsidiaries. Other commentators propose that absorptive capacity may moderate the relationship between KT and knowledge sustainability in the foreign affiliates (Gonzalez and Chakraborty, 2014). Another study showed that the receiver's absorptive capacity is fundamental for effective and efficient knowledge flow between members within intra-organisation networks (Mu et al., 2010). The meta-analysis conducted by Wijk et al. (2008) corroborated that absorptive capacity was a predictor of KT within organisations. Szulaski (2000) studied the impact of three characteristics of the recipient (lack of motivation, lack of absorptive capacity, and retentive capacity) on the stickiness associated with each of the four phases of KT. Results confirmed that the recipient's: (1) lack of motivation adversely affected the ramp-up and integration phases; (2) lack of absorptive

capacity was positively related to the stickiness during the implementation, ramp up, and integration stages; and (3) lack of retentive capacity was negatively related to the stickiness of ramp-up stage.

In the expatriation literature, Ruisala and Smale (2007) pointed out that absorptive capacity was a significant negative antecedent of stickiness experienced by expatriates in transferring knowledge to host units. Notwithstanding, in their qualitative study, Ruisala and Suutari (2004) mention that expatriates highlight that organisational capacity is not a generic/major problem because people differ in their learning capacity and educational backgrounds and that younger generations are more eager for Westernisation, whereas older generations cannot sustain.

Surprisingly, although some studies contemplate that absorptive capacity is essential for local hosts as receivers of knowledge transferred to them by expatriates, absorptive capacity is important for expatriates as well. In Chang and Smale's (2013) study, they claim that expatriates should first learn and absorb knowledge from headquarters before transferring knowledge across borders. In their study's context of the HRM knowledge transfer, expatriates should be adept at absorbing, retaining, applying, and possessing a sufficient stock of the HRM knowledge to facilitate the diffusion of this knowledge in foreign subsidiaries.

In addition to absorptive capacity, some other characteristics have been reported as significant determinants of KT, such as receiving unit adaptability (Williams, 2007), and the strategic alliance partner's intention to learn (Khamseh, and Jolly, 2008).

#### **2.7.4.4. Social Capital and Knowledge Sharing/Transfer**

Social capital (SC), undeniably, has captivated the interest of many researchers in dozens of studies related to the KT literature over the past decades. SC signifies the “close interpersonal relationships existing within individual’s social networks” (Cabrera and Cabrera, 2005, p.72). According to Nahapiet and Ghoshal (1998), SC has three components: structural, relational, and cognitive. The structural component denotes the network configuration, including linkages or ties among members. The cognitive aspect represents the shared vision, narratives, and language that enhance mutual understanding, and subsequently lead to effective communications. The relational dimension captures the affective part of SC, and it portrays the network relationships concerning trust, shared norms, and the degree of identification. Hence, it focuses on the quality of the relationships (Cabrera and Cabrera, 2005). According to Makela (2007, p.109), SC can be approached from different perspectives, encompassing both the “bonding” and “bridging” approaches. The former emphasises the impact of social ties linking individuals (i.e., within-group connections). The latter stresses the benefits emerging from bridging disconnections (i.e., between-group ties).

It is well acknowledged and proven that the SC theory is a prominent theoretical platform used in explaining KT dynamics at both the individual and organisational levels. For example, Hau et al. (2013) found that SC had a significant positive impact on KS intentions. Ko et al. (2005) claimed that the existence of mutual understanding between the knowledge sender and receiver promoted KT, whereas the existence of an arduous relationship between both parties hampered KT. Moreover, Kang and Kim (2010) hypothesised that group identification of both knowledge senders and receivers could be positively related to KT. However, the results showed that group identification level of knowledge recipient had a significant impact; however, group



identification for knowledge sender was not significant. It is suggested that the sense of belongingness between individuals supports KT within groups (Wilkesmann et al., 2009). Likewise, Cabrera and Cabrera (2005) propose that the working environment characterised by social ties, shared language, trust, and group identification may be positively associated with KS. Additionally, KS intention was found to be positively influenced by reciprocity (Lin et al., 2012; Hau et al., 2013). Additionally, it is highlighted that individuals who share “superordinate social identity” with routine transferors within a group are more likely to absorb this routine if found superior to them. Conversely, individuals suffering from a lack of social identity inhibit routine adoption even if it was of great benefit to them (Kane et al., 2005).

In the expatriation context, recent research outlines that compared to Japanese assigned expatriates in Japanese foreign affiliates in China, Japanese self-initiated expatriates are more adept at gaining more experience, acquiring language proficiency, and building relational (trust) SC with Chinese locals, Japanese assigned expatriates, and the headquarter in Japan, and this SC promotes their potential function as boundary spanners (Furusawa and Brewster, 2019). Additionally, Chang and Smale (2013) found that when the quality of interpersonal relationships between expatriates and domestic HR managers of local units were high, the HRM practices’ transfer might be highly facilitated. Moreover, Chang et al. (2012b) suggested that expatriates’ social capital engendered through informal interactions with local hosts enabled them to seek opportunities to overcome KT difficulties. Another study showed that interpersonal sensitivity and communication facilities between expatriates and local employees created a fertilised climate for KT (Bonache and Zarraga-Oberty, 2008). In their qualitative study, Ruisala and Suutari (2004, p.766) concluded that “a high level of identification with the parent company increases the successfulness of KT due to shared values and goals.”

Notwithstanding, when Ruisala and Smale (2007) quantitatively examined the relational context's influence on KT difficulty, they demonstrated that local hosts' commitment and identification were not salient at the expatriate task level, and even if both aspects existed, they had no discernible effect on KT by expatriates. Although some of the previous attitudinal aspects have been empirically underpinned in some studies, the results are still inconsistent in others. Makela (2007) concludes that expatriates' relationships are necessary as a source of social ties that act as a medium for KS across borders. Also, expatriates' relationships are richer and longer, which can create chances to share knowledge when compared to "arm's-length cross border relationships." The latter refers to relations developed by MNCs managers through everyday meetings, emails, visits, and telephone conversations. Recent research also underpinned that social capital had a significant association with expatriates' KS (Wu et al., 2021).

Noorderhaven and Harzing (2009) conducted a study on the role of social interactions between managers across units of MNCs in KS. They found that intensive social interaction was a stimulating factor for KS at the intra-organisational level of MNCs. Reiche et al. (2009) conceived expatriates as knowledge boundary spanners across MNCs' units and developed a cross-level model exploring how expatriates' social capital could create intellectual capital within units. They argued that expatriates, as knowledge mediators, could engender intellectual capital via establishing a bridge connecting their home and host unit's social capital. This, in turn, might facilitate access to unbridged informational resources. Additionally, they proposed that expatriates' structural social capital with units' local staff might boost the diversity and volume of their acquired knowledge.

On the inter-organisational level, myriad studies concluded that social interaction mechanisms (Bjorkman et al., 2004), shared vision (Fang and Bang, 2016), social networks, and social capital across different networks (Argote and Fahrenkopf, 2016), social connectedness, and trust (Santoro and Bierly, 2006), relational and cognitive aspects of organisational socialisation (Taskin and Bridoux, 2010), strong ties, trust, and shared vision (Wijk et al., 2008), social capital and efficacy beliefs (Zummermann and Ravishankar, 2012), reciprocity (He and Wei, 2009), the strength of ties (Kang and Kim, 2010), trust in management (Renzi, 2008), social proximity (Darr and Kurtzberg, 2000; Sorenson et al., 2006), and network centrality (Tsai, 2001) positively affected KS/KT<sup>30</sup>.

Other scholars have focused on identifying the factors that can create SC, such as different forms of international assignments (Bozkurt and Mohr, 2011), governance mechanism (Gooderham et al., 2011), and headquarter/subsidiary interdependence (Kostova and Roth, 2003).

#### **2.7.4.5. Demographics, attitudinal, and Contextual factors, and Knowledge Sharing/Transfer**

This section reviews some contextual factors that impinge on KS/KT. Some scholars studied the impact of individuals' and subsidiaries' demographics, such as age, size, location, and tenure on KT. For example, scholars supported the non-significant impact of subsidiaries' age

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<sup>30</sup> Despite its benefits, some scholars highlight the dark-side of SC by recognising its potential pitfalls. More specifically, Taylor (2007, p.339) articulates that "SC is not unalloyed good for any organisation." This is justified in three ways. First, high bonding SC within a group inhibits knowledge flow from other groups, thereby leading to excessive group closure. As a consequence, KT and innovation are blocked. Second, the nutrition of relational SC entails individuals to invest more effort and time. Finally, some individuals within the group may acquire power over time and exploit their position within the group for knowledge retention instead of diffusion (Taylor, 2007).

on KT at the inter-organisational level (Wijk et al., 2008; Nooderhaven and Harzing, 2009). Meanwhile, recent research unveiled that age had a positive effect on transferring tacit-knowledge but not on transferring explicit knowledge in international joint ventures (Park et al., 2015). The subsidiary's size was also examined, and it was found that it had a significant positive effect on knowledge flows from subsidiaries to headquarters and peer subsidiaries. In parallel, recent research by Williams and Lee (2016) remarked a consistent positive effect of the subsidiary's size on knowledge inflow and outflow. Conversely, Bjorkman et al. (2004) did not find support for the subsidiary's size on knowledge outflow. In addition to size, entry mode was found to affect knowledge outflow, such that acquired firms were expected to transfer more knowledge to peer subsidiaries compared to their greenfield counterparts (Gupta and Govindarajan, 2000; Bjorkman et al., 2004). Regarding location, Li et al. (2007) suggested that subsidiaries located in highly developed countries (Finland) were more inclined to transfer knowledge outwardly to headquarters than other affiliates based in less developed countries (China). Consistently, Yang et al. (2008) stated that the location of the host country was very important for KT implementation. Moreover, the relative economic level of the subsidiary influenced KT to and from the parent company (Gupta and Govindarajan, 2000). Finally, at the individual level, Watson and Hewett (2006) unfolded that individuals' tenure was significantly and positively related to knowledge contribution. However, a more recent study by Ali et al. (2021) found that education and experience (control variables) did not have a significant effect on KS. They further found that work engagement had a significant positive influence on expatriates' KS; however, job insecurity did not have any significant effect.

Other researchers have given considerable primacy in the KT literature to the role of HRM practices in fostering KS. For instance, Cabrera and Cabrera (2005) theoretically proposed

some relevant organisational practices to be embraced for KS facilitation among individuals, including work design (e.g., teamwork), staffing (e.g., person-organisation fit), training and development (e.g., extensive training and socialising programmes), performance appraisal (e.g., the inclusion of KS as a criterion for evaluation), culture (e.g., embedding KS as a norm), perceived support, fairness, and compensation (e.g., extrinsic and intrinsic rewards), and technology (e.g., using IT to promote social network). Similarly, Gagne (2009) proposed that intrinsically motivated individuals (due to the HRM practices) might have strong intentions to share knowledge. Likewise, in the expatriation literature, Bonache and Zarraga-Oberty (2008) anticipated that expatriates' extrinsic motivation (reward system and performance evaluation criteria) and intrinsic motivation (selection of self-motivated persons, loyalty, and participation-based psychological contract) might affect KT. Recent research supported the significant positive influence of five <sup>31</sup>HRM practices both directly and indirectly (via human capital enhancement) on KS (Ouerdian et al., 2019). Nonetheless, the empirical findings regarding the effect of intrinsic/extrinsic motivation on KS are mixed and inconsistent. For example, Hau et al. (2013) concluded that KS intention was impacted positively and negatively by intrinsic and extrinsic motivations, respectively<sup>32</sup>. Haak-Saheem et al. (2017) found that both intrinsic and extrinsic motivations had a positive influence on knowledge sharing. Conversely, it was found that knowledge source's extrinsic motivation (rewards) had no significant effect on KS (Ko et al., 2005; Kang and Kim, 2010; Jiacheng et al., 2010).

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<sup>31</sup> The authors focused on 5 practices: recruitment and selection, performance appraisal, compensation, teamwork, and training and development

<sup>32</sup> In particular, intrinsic motivation (enjoyment) was positively significantly associated with intentions to share both tacit and explicit knowledge, whereas extrinsic motivation positively predicted explicit KS and negatively predicted tacit KS intention.

At the intra-organisational level in the expatriation setting, Minbaeva et al. (2003) noticed that subsidiaries that used the HRM practices enhancing extrinsic motivation reported a high level of KS within these subsidiaries. Whilst, the use of the HRM practices for intrinsic motivation had a nonsignificant positive effect on KS. One final important result was that the complementarity (interaction effect) of both kinds of motivation had a significant negative influence on KS within these subsidiaries, although the individual effect of each one of them was positive and significant in the interaction model<sup>33</sup>.

Regarding the contextual factor related to the use of teamwork and information technology, research stipulated that teamwork minimised the knowledge gap between the parent company and foreign affiliates, whilst information technology had no significant effect on narrowing the knowledge gap (Fang and Bang, 2016). Additionally, recent research underpinned the importance of empowerment practices in Korean MNCs' subsidiaries due to their positive significant impact on both knowledge inflow and outflow (Williams and Lee, 2016). Therefore, some scholars coincided that entrenching participation within the organisational climate was essential for predicting KT (Locus and Orilvie, 2006; Williams and Lee, 2016).

In addition, some other organisational dimensions, such as “subsidiary autonomy” and “decentralisation”, have been debated among the IB scholars. For instance, Gupta and Govindarajan (2000) concluded that the less the degree of the subsidiary's decision-making decentralisation, the more the knowledge flowed in this subsidiary from the headquarter. Likewise, Nooderhaven and Harzing (2009) examined the direct effect of the subsidiary's

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<sup>33</sup> This result reconfirms the fact that extrinsic motivation inhibits intrinsic motivation, leading to negative outcomes (Deci and Ryan, 2000).

autonomy on KT, and they argued that autonomous subsidiaries were less motivated to either receive or send knowledge. Their findings reported a nonsignificant negative effect of autonomy on knowledge transferred from and to that subsidiary. In their meta-analysis, Wijk et al. (2008) found that the effect of decentralisation on KT was underestimated.

Furthermore, other commentators have placed a major emphasis on the relationship between the cultural context and KT. However, the results are still controversial. For example, Sarala and Vaara (2010) provided ample quantitative evidence that national cultural differences were positively related to KT in the international acquisitions. This result was built on the positive point of view arguing that both the acquiring and acquired companies might have a different repository of knowledge and routines when acquisitions were conducted in a culturally distant destination. As a consequence, if both stocks of knowledge were diverse, this insinuated that such kind of knowledge might be complementary and less duplicative, thereby enhancing the potential of KT. They further highlighted that organisational cultural convergence between both parties of acquisition facilitated KT. In a similar vein, another qualitative study emphasised that KT was affected by certain national cultural dimensions, encompassing uncertainty avoidance, power distance, in-group collectivism, and performance orientations (Wilksmann et al., 2009). Meanwhile, Fang and Bang (2016) did not find any support for the impact of CD on the knowledge gap between the headquarter and the subsidiary.

According to Wijk et al. (2008), the influence of CD on KS is more complicated. The findings of their meta-analysis elucidated that CD impeded KS across units within companies, as such units tended to share knowledge with other units they were familiar with. On the other hand, they pointed out that acquiring firms had more experience to deal with cultural differences when they acquired knowledge from external partners. They, therefore, recommended

conducting further qualitative research to understand why CD was less detrimental to KS between different companies than within companies.

Another strand of studies addressed the impact of CD on KT from the institutional theory perspective by focusing on the host country's institutional (regulatory, normative, and cultural-cognitive) context. In this essence, Kamoche and Harvey (2006) provide three theoretical assumptions claiming that: (1) the lower the uncertainty in the regulatory framework, the more the tacit knowledge diffusion; (2) the higher the consistency among cultural norms and the more the expatriates' preparation for learning about values and norms of the host country, the more successful the knowledge diffusion; and (3) the greater the expatriates' sensitivity to the social context and the greater the level of stability, the more the successfulness of knowledge diffusion. Similarly, Ruisala and Suutari (2004) explored expatriates' narratives about the impact of the host country's three institutional pillars on the difficulty they experienced in KT. They explicated that expatriates experienced some problems, such as authorities' bureaucracy, legislation complexity, the ubiquitous bribes, and other cultural issues, which increased the stickiness of KT. In Ruisala and Smale's (2007) study, the impact of these three pillars was quantitatively examined on KT difficulty. They concluded that only the regulatory dimension had a significant positive effect on KT difficulty in the host country. However, as previously mentioned, Ambos and Ambos (2009) indicated that the effectiveness of knowledge transfer within MNCs was significantly affected by CD.

In addition to culture, Welch and Welch (2008) emphasised the importance of language as a contextual factor that was suggested to affect several aspects (e.g., cost, transfer mechanism, teams, networks, trust, staff movement, and motivation) contributing to KT. Rather than



looking at linguistic distance, Schomaker and Zaheer (2014) found that linguistic relatedness facilitated knowledge communication.

Moreover, Napier (2005) developed a framework to understand the contextual factors influencing foreign management ideas transfer to Vietnamese managerial and academic colleagues. In this framework, it was argued that the organisational context should be characterised by flexibility, persistence, and team building in order to enhance KT. Other associates found that KS intention was positively impacted by attitudes toward KS, subjective norm, and organisational climate featured by innovation, affiliation, and fairness (Bock et al., 2005; Jiacheng et al., 2010). Ultimately, Boh and Wong (2015) indicated that organisation's orientation toward risk-taking affects outside subsidiary knowledge sharing between the unit managers and employees.

In the next section, the review is turned to the concept of expatriates' willingness to renew their current assignments.

## **2.8. Expatriates' Willingness to Renew the Current Assignment**

In the international context, it is well-documented that expatriate assignments provide several potential advantages, albeit incurring the high costs of expatriate relocation. Given the challenges and difficulties experienced, international assignments have been devoted substantial attention by expatriation scholars (Collings et al., 2007). It is highlighted that MNCs encounter the difficulty of expatriates' retention on overseas assignments (Okpara and Kabongo, 2011). This is typically manifested in the negative outcomes of expatriation that have been extensively examined in the expatriation literature, such as withdrawal intention (Pinto et al., 2012; Pinto et al., 2017), intention to leave current assignment (Hechanova et al., 2003),

premature repatriation intention (Firth et al., 2014), and withdrawal cognitions (Shaffer and Harrison, 1998; Bhaskar-Shrinivas et al., 2005; Shaffer et al., 2006). Okpara and Kabongo (2011, p.22) state that expatriates' percentage of premature repatriation from their current assignments to their home countries ranged from 10 – 80%. Prior scholars conceptualise withdrawal intentions as the personal thought and plan to leave the assignment before completion or prematurely return to the home country (see Shaffer and Harrison, 1998; Bhaskar-Shrinivas et al., 2005; Firth et al., 2014).

Indeed, several influential efforts have been exerted in the expatriation scholarly research to identify the antecedents of withdrawal cognitions and premature repatriation intentions. Among all the examined antecedents, expatriate adjustment was found to be the most commonly cited predictor in multiple studies (see Pinto et al., 2012; Takeuchi et al., 2005a; Firth et al., 2014; Shaffer et al., 2006; Bhaskar-Shrinivas et al., 2005). Collectively, the previous scholars coincide that expatriates, who are able to adjust to their work setting, interact with local hosts, and adjust to their general environment, are less likely to withdraw from their current assignment before its formal end. However, the results are not consistent. For example, the meta-analysis by Bhaskar-Shrinivas et al. (2005) generally stipulates that expatriates' three facets (i.e., work, interaction, and general) of adjustment are significantly and negatively associated with their withdrawal intentions. Takeuchi et al. (2005a) unveiled that both general and interaction adjustment had a significant negative impact on early return intentions. Meanwhile, Pinto et al. (2012) found that only work adjustment was negatively related to expatriates' withdrawal intentions. Consistently, Firth et al. (2014) highlighted that work adjustment was a negative predictor of premature return intention.

Other accounts examined the impact of some individual and attitudinal factors on withdrawal intentions, such as job satisfaction and organisational commitment (Hechanova et al., 2003; Shaffer and Harrison, 1998), and general assignment satisfaction (Pinto et al., 2012). By and large, there exists a general consensus among the previous scholars that satisfaction and commitment are significant negative predictors of withdrawal intentions. Regarding the individual factors, Shaffer et al. (2006) investigated the effect of the big five personality characteristics (extroversion, conscientiousness, agreeableness, emotional stability, and intellectance) on withdrawal cognitions. Among these five characteristics, only emotional stability was found to be significantly associated with withdrawal cognitions.

Another strand of studies shifted the attention to the factors that might foster expatriates' actual retention and intentions to complete the current assignments. For example, Black and Stephens (1989) supported that expatriates' and spouses' general and interaction adjustment promoted their intention to stay until the completion of their assignments. Kraimer and Wayne (2004) hypothesised that expatriates' adjustment and commitment to the parent company and foreign subsidiary might foster their intentions to complete their assignments. Their findings supported the significant negative predictive power of adjustment on assignment completion intentions; however, neither commitment to parent company nor commitment to foreign subsidiary had significant predictive power. Some scholars focused on the influence of some contextual factors on expatriates' retention, such as job/organisational embeddedness. In the domestic literature, the notion underlying job embeddedness is that the retention of employees is a function of their perceived congruence with job, company, external society, perceived sacrifices when leaving, and strong ties with others (Mitchell et al., 2001). Putting the previous notion in the expatriation context, Pinto et al. (2017) argue that expatriates are expected to

complete their current assignment if they find a fit with the host organisation, feel affiliated with their colleagues of local hosts, and believe that premature repatriation may incorporate losing personal/professional/psychological benefits. They found that expatriates were more prone to complete their assignments when they perceived solidarity and sociability in the host organisational culture. Moreover, Ren et al. (2015) found that expatriates who thrived at the host workplace were more likely to remain on their current assignments.

While the previous streams of studies seemed to be auspicious, they overlooked an important new variable, namely “current assignment renewal intention.” According to the researcher’s best knowledge and based on the literature review, there is no specific definition for this concept. However, the study draws on prior scholars’ logic in the conceptualisation of “withdrawal intention” to introduce a definition for this suggested concept. In this regard, the current study conceptualises “current assignment renewal intention” as the personal thought and plan to rejuvenate the current assignment after its official end and remain in the host country for another similar period.

The study by Ren et al. (2015) indicated that thriving predicted expatriates’ actual retention, and they recommended future researchers to examine other outcomes of thriving. Following their call, the current study speculates that expatriates’ thriving may also be a good catalyst for their intentions to renew their current assignments as well.

The next section reviews and discusses the literature concerning the concept of expatriate performance.

## **2.9. Expatriate Performance**

### **2.9.1 A background on the Conceptualisation of Expatriate Performance**

Besides adjustment, commitment, withdrawal cognitions, and other criteria, expatriate job performance has been increasingly conceived as one of the significant indicators of “expatriate success” (Caligiuri, 1997; Caligiuri, 2000; Kraimer and Wayne, 2004; Hemmasi, Downes, and Varner, 2010) and “expatriate effectiveness” (Liu and Shaffer, 2005). Evidence of “overseas success” is seen by expatriates’ completion of assignments, adjustment to the new culture, and well-performance (Ayman and Kanungo, 1997). Meanwhile, it is outlined that expatriates are sent abroad to perform a job rather than to adjust well (Sinangil and Ones, 1997; Hippler, 2014). However, the expatriation literature opts to discuss overseas success, leaving a limited focus on performance as an outcome variable (Thomas and Lazarova, 2012). The previous fact is further confirmed by Hippler (2014, p.337), who states that “research on expatriate performance is still in its infancy.” Accordingly, Caligiuri (1997, p.133) supports the importance of providing attention to expatriate performance despite the significance of the three criteria.

Scholars pose some critical considerations when assessing expatriate performance, such as “who should assess performance? And what are the facets of expatriate performance?” (Thomas and Lazarova, 2012; Hippler, 2014). The first consideration is important because prior research found that home vs host country managers had a differential effect on performance ratings (Dalton and Wilson, 2000). Regarding performance facets, Caligiuri’s (1997, p.123) typology classifying expatriate performance dimensions has been influentially driven by Borman and Motowildo (1993), who argue that both domestic and international jobs comprise both technical and contextual dimensions. She further expands this taxonomy and dismantles

job performance into four broad categories: “technical” (i.e., executing tasks, duties, and responsibilities), “contextual/prosocial” (i.e., expatriate commitment and motivation to execute extra roles), “contextual/managerial” (maintaining high-quality relationships with local co-workers and training them), and “expatriate specific performance” (i.e., replacement planning, language/culture competency, and commitment and knowledge transferring to the host subsidiary). Perhaps one of the main concerns related to her typology is that she includes an expatriate-specific aspect that adds more complexity to expatriates’ tasks despite its relevance to the expatriate assignment. Consequently, numerous expatriation scholars adopt the short version previously suggested by Borman and Motowildo (1993), which includes only task and contextual performance dimensions in their empirical studies (Lee and Donohue, 2012).

Moreover, it should be acknowledged that subsequent researchers (Lee and Donohue, 2012, p.1197) attempt to conceptualise and validate performance in terms of six dimensions, comprising: “task performance, maintaining personal discipline, demonstrating effort, communication performance management, and administration team and leadership performance.” However, their study encounters two major limitations: (1) the measure has not undergone CFA and has not been cross-validated on a separate larger sample, thereby lacking construct validity; and (2) the study is limited to merely one nationality (Australian expatriates in China), thereby limiting the generalisability to other expatriate groups. Hence, this operationalisation seems to be unreliable.

Based on the previous review, the present study conceptualises and operationalises expatriate performance as a multidimensional construct, comprising both task and contextual dimensions. Task performance is defined as “the expatriate performance on meeting job objectives and technical aspects of the job” (Kraimer and Wayne, 2004, p.211). Contextual performance refers

to the capacity to effectively develop and maintain good relationships with the host country's workplace nationals (Harrison and Shaffer, 2005; Lee and Sukoco, 2010). This is in line with organisational scholars who recommend studying performance as a multifaceted construct rather than a unitary one to be best understood (Caligiuri and Day, 2000).

As expatriate performance is one of the final outcomes, the next section displays prior studies on its antecedents.

## **2.9.2. Prior Studies on the Antecedents of Expatriate Performance**

A set of (74) articles has undergone categorisation and coding for revealing the common themes (predictors) predominantly identified by the articles' titles and subheadings. In doing so, the review and analysis resulted in generating the following generic themes:

### **2.9.2.1. Environmental Factors and Expatriate Performance**

Some of the reviewed articles examined two important host environment-related factors that might be perceived by expatriates as stressful and subsequently might affect their performance. The first factor was the cultural novelty that was found by Kraimer and Wayne (2004) to negatively influence task and contextual performance. Albeit not being their key interest, cultural distance, as a control, negatively affected task performance (Wu and Ang, 2011).

The second one contended with the contextual features of the host macro environment in terms of being stable or turbulent. More explicitly, if expatriation was perceived as stressful in the normal circumstances, the issue would be amplified when expatriates worked under exceptional circumstances, such as "terrorism" (Bader and Berg, 2013). Accordingly, this implied that expatriates' performance might not be the same in both cases. In essence, a growing body of research sheds a spotlight on this issue to understand how expatriates perform in "terrorism-endangered" countries (see Bader and Berg, 2013; Bader and Berg, 2014; Bader, Berg, and Holtbrugge, 2015). More particularly, in their conceptually developed and empirically tested framework, Bader and Berg (2013, p.164) claim that expatriates may perceive a high level of stress that emanates from four potential sources ("terrorist activity, threat level, impeding living conditions, and family conflict"). They further postulate that this perceived stress influences expatriates' interaction with local hosts and their work attitudes



negatively, and both, in turn, may diminish job performance. Their empirical results found support for the previous line of hypothesised relationships.

In a subsequent study, Bader and Berg (2014) attempt to conceptually broaden the previous model by proposing some moderators, such as training and perceived organisational support (to buffer the negative effect of stressors on stress-inducing terrorism) and anti-stress programmes (to alleviate the negative attitudes-performance relationship).

### **2.9.2.2. Organisational Factors and Expatriate Performance**

The reviewed articles capture some organisational factors that may directly/indirectly impinge on expatriates' performance, which are categorised into the following sub-themes:

#### **2.9.2.2.1. Work-related Factors and Performance**

The expatriation literature alludes to the fact that some aspects of work roles constitute a major source of stress, which encompass: role ambiguity, role conflict, and role overload. According to the conceptual model by Wang (2002), these three dysfunctional features attached to expatriates' roles may influence their performance because such role stressors dampen expatriates' psychological well-being. Empirical evidence suggested that role clarity (conceived as one of the newcomers' adjustment facets) was positively linked to expatriate performance (Bauer, Boduer, and Tucker, 2007). Another study on expatriate performance in Saudi Arabia by Showail, Parsk, and Smith (2013) noted that role ambiguity was indirectly related to expatriate performance through the mediating mechanism of organisational identification. Also, Kraimer and Wayne (2004) pointed out that role ambiguity affected task performance negatively.

Another stream of research considered some negative work-related factors that if experienced by expatriates, their performance would be negatively affected. For instance, Hechanova et al.'s (2003) meta-analysis identified a direct negative effect of job strain on performance, whilst Takeuchi et al., (2005b) found the relationship between them to be an inverted U-curve. Additionally, while not being their main interest, Wang and Takeuchi (2007) captured a direct negative effect flowed from work stress to job performance.

#### **2.9.2.2.2. Social Support and Performance**

The extensive literature on social support-performance linkage has acknowledged that expatriates may be provided by three broad types of support: informational, instrumental, and emotional support (Caligiuri and Lazarova, 2002) from different sources, such as organisations, supervisors, friends, local co-workers, and family/Spouse (Kraimer et al., 2001). The most recent meta-analysis by Van Der Laken, Van Engen, Van Veldhoven, and Paauwe (2019) confirmed that the overall social support received by expatriates from work, family, and community domains had a significant positive influence on expatriate performance, with the family (spouses and children) and community (friends) support appeared to be significantly stronger than support from work domain (organisation, supervisors, and peers) in relation to expatriate performance. Each of the previous sources of support is discussed below:

##### **2.9.2.2.2.1. Perceived Organisational Support (POS) and Performance**

Among these sources, the perceived organisational support (POS), from either parent or host companies, has been given particular attention by expatriation scholars who categorise it into three sub-dimensions: career POS, financial POS, and adjustment POS (Kraimer et al., 2001; Kraimer and Wayne, 2004). The overall package of POS was found to have a direct and indirect

(i.e., via adjustment) positive impact on expatriate performance (Abdul Malek et al., 2015). A similar study by Wang and Takeuchi (2007) reported that only work adjustment mediated the POS-performance relationship.

Meanwhile, other associates (Kawai and Strange, 2014) outlined that only career POS was indirectly and positively related to performance via work adjustment. Additionally, Kraimer and Wayne's (2004) findings disclosed that financial POS facilitated task performance, and more surprisingly, the relationship between adjustment POS and both contextual and task performance was significantly negative. They plausibly explained the latter astonishing result as when expatriates received more adjustment support (e.g., cross-cultural training), they became more aware of the cultural differences and adapted to the new culture to the extent that made them less job-focused. Meanwhile, the meta-analysis by Van Der Laken et al. (2019) found that adjustment POS did not significantly affect expatriate performance.

Apart from the direct influence of POS, some studies were interested in its role as a boundary condition. For example, it was found that POS interacted with some variables, such as HCN's prejudice against females (Shen and Jiang, 2015), and organisational identification (Showail et al., 2013) to boost expatriate performance.

#### **2.9.2.2.2. Supervisor Support and Performance**

Supervisor support is equally important for improving expatriates' performance. Drawing on the leader-member exchange (LMX) platform, some studies consistently alluded to its positive impact on expatriates' task and contextual performance (Kraimer et al., 2001; Kraimer and Wayne, 2004). Subsequent researchers further bolstered this point by outlining that expatriates who developed and maintained high-quality relationships with local followers were more likely

to accomplish a better task, contextual, and overall performance (Harrison and Shaffer, 2005). Likewise, Lee et al. (2013) asserted that both sources (Supervisor and POS) of social support simultaneously were crucial significant factors for enhancing expatriate performance.

### **2.9.2.2.3. Family/Spousal Support and Performance**

The vital role of family/spouse support has also been acknowledged in the literature on expatriate performance despite the existence of two contradictory perspectives. Some studies documented the positive significant impact of spousal support (Sambasivan et al., 2017) and family accompanying (Shi and Franklin, 2014) on promoting expatriate performance. Another evidence confirmed the positive spillover transferring from family to expatriate work despite the non-significant effect of the family adjustment on expatriate performance (Trompetter, Bussin, and Nienaber, 2016). On the other hand, despite family support, family existence was found to interrupt expatriates' work-life (work-family conflict), and this adversely affected their performance (Shih, Chiang, and Hsu, 2013). In the meantime, other accounts found that family problems were not significantly related to female expatriates' performance (Shen and Jiang, 2015).

The previous family-performance linkage was also discussed when expatriates were posted to abnormal (terrorism-endangered) countries. Research on this underpinned that family and children accompanying did not significantly affect expatriates' performance. Concomitantly, support was found for intra-family conflict (due to the lack of safety) as an inhibitor of performance (Bader et al., 2015).

#### **2.9.2.2.2.4. Host Country National (HCNs) Support and Performance**

A review of prior theoretical explanation and empirical work signified the pivotal role that host country nationals (HCNs) can play as valuable socialising agents and mentors to facilitate expatriates' roles in the international assignments. Expatriates can yield greater benefits from such kind of social support that potentially impacts their performance (Toh and Denisi, 2005; Toh and DeNisi, 2007; Carraher, Sullivan, and Crocitto, 2008; Bruning et al., 2012; Caligiuri, BaytalsKaya, and Lazarova, 2016).

Many theorists argue that local colleagues function as a significant source of informational support from which expatriates can: (1) get access to valuable information and knowledge that may help them to better understand local cultural norms and correctly interpret daily stimuli; (2) ease pressures related to role information (e.g., who to contact), especially at the initial challenging period of assignment; and (3) gain access to the necessary relational networks (e.g., raw material suppliers, customer, and business associates) that facilitate their task performance (Toh and DeNisi, 2005; Mahajan and DeSilva, 2012). Another kind of support possibly received by expatriates is emotional support (e.g., empathy, care, and love) that emerges from social interactions and relationship building (Caligiuri and Lazarova, 2002; Caligiuri et al., 2016). Emotional support nurtures expatriates' senses of belongingness, being valued and self-esteemed (Toh and DeNisi, 2005), and psychological security (Caligiuri and Lazarova, 2002).

Both kinds of support<sup>34</sup> are typically important for reducing expatriates' confusion and uncertainty, enhancing their cultural sensitivity, and mitigating stress, loneliness, and isolation

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<sup>34</sup> For expatriates to utilise all these forms of support, they must go through three preliminary stages: (1) expatriates must be willing to seek support from local colleagues; (2) expatriates must perceive local colleagues to be knowledgeable and have host country expertise and adjustment empathy; and (3) local colleagues must be willing

(Caligiuri and Lazarova, 2002). In this essence, it is suggested that local staff's social support helps expatriates to perform their routine activities (Mahajan and DeSilva, 2012) and achieve successful performance (Caligiuri et al., 2016).

The extant empirical research uncovers that when expatriates have host mentors, their job performance may be fostered because such host mentors provide expatriates with guidance to solve any potential problems in unfamiliar circumstances and assist them to develop multiple skills (Carragher et al., 2008). Likewise, Bruning et al. (2012) reported an improvement in expatriates' performance when HCNs colleagues existed in their social networks. Additionally, Caligiuri et al. (2016) pointed out that perceived support from the host working environment was positively associated with expatriate performance, and such a relationship was strengthened when expatriates had high cultural humility.

It should be interestingly noted that the role of host nationals was not limited just to the provision of social support to expatriates. A qualitative study by Vance and Ensher (2002) provided ample evidence underpinning the influential voice of the host workforce as an input for designing and enhancing expatriate training programmes and performance.

Despite the previous numerous expected benefits of HCNs, some researchers alluded to the negative attitudes (e.g., prejudice against women) held by HCNs, which were found to adversely impact female expatriates' performance (Shen and Jiang, 2015).

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and able to provide support. Following this, expatriates commence the formation of their social ties and networks (Fahr, Bartol, Shapiro, and Shin, 2010).

### **2.9.2.2.2.5. Cross-cultural Training and Performance**

As previously noted that cross-cultural training (CCT) is conceived as one of the types of adjustment POS potentially received by expatriates from the parent company (Kraimer and Wayne, 2004), some studies discuss its independent impact on expatriates' performance but with mixed results. Earlier expatriation scholars argue that CCT-performance linkage is a critical concern and propose that CCT is quite essential for expatriates to achieve high performance, particularly when their host country's job is highly interactive-based (Black and Mendenhall, 1990). Prior qualitative research noted the effectiveness of short-term assignments and oriented trips as a form of high rigor CCT compared to in-country lecture CCT for Australian MNCs in that the former reinforced expatriate experience before posting them to long-term assignments. This unique type of CCT was found to be effective in reducing failure (i.e., improving performance) (Shen and Lang, 2009). Another qualitative study supported the importance of CCT for expatriates to achieve successful performance in the UAE (Cerimagic, 2011). Two meta-analyses bolstered the positive significant influence of CCT on expatriates' performance (Deshpande and Viswesvaran, 1992; Morris and Robie, 2002). Other accounts found that CCT was positively linked to expatriate performance through the mediating effect of work and interaction adjustment (Wang and Tran, 2012). On the contrary, Qin and Baruch (2010) declared that CCT did not significantly lead to improved performance despite the expatriates' recognition of its importance. The previous contradictory result was further supported by the most recent meta-analysis by Van Der Laken et al. (2019), in which they found CCT did not significantly affect expatriate performance.

### **2.9.2.2.3. Other Miscellaneous Organisational Factors**

Some other organisational/contextual predictors of performance have also been discussed in the literature. For example, Fernandes and Awamleh (2006) scrutinised the effect of organisational (distributive, procedural, and interactional) justice on the self-rated performance of expatriates in the UAE, but unfortunately, no significant effect was captured for the hypothesised relationship. Another organisational factor that was found to be a direct positive predictor of expatriates' performance was positive psychological contract (Qin and Baruch, 2010). Also, psychological contract served a moderating role in the adjustment-performance relationship (Lee and Kartika, 2014). The implementation of high involvement work systems (HR flow, work structuring, reward system, and employee influence) strongly predicted expatriates' performance rated by supervisors (Shih et al., 2013). Ultimately, some scholars alluded to the importance of the transformational leadership style for ameliorating expatriates' performance (Lee et al., 2013).

### **2.9.2.3. Individual Differences and Expatriate Performance**

A substantial bulk of the reviewed studies have greatly supported the pivotal role of individual differences in affecting expatriates' performance. Individual differences cover the personality characteristics, abilities, and demographics (e.g., gender, experience, education, and so forth) (Kim and Slocum, 2008). Leiba-O'Sullivan (1999) viewed personality traits as cross-cultural competencies and classified them as stable (e.g., big five personality traits) and dynamic (e.g., cultural knowledge, self-efficacy, and so forth). In line with this, the review is exhibited as follows:



### **2.9.2.3.1. Stable Personality Traits and Performance**

Among the increasing interest in personality attributes, there exists a greater scholarly work that focuses on the role of stable big five personality (agreeableness, conscientiousness, extroversion, openness, and emotional stability) traits in influencing expatriates' performance. However, when it comes to the empirical results, findings are mixed and capricious. For instance, some researchers found that among the aforementioned five traits, only conscientiousness was the most important ingredient for better supervisor-rated performance (Ones and Viswesvaran, 1999; Caligiuri, 2000). A study by Dalton and Wilson (2000) examined agreeableness, conscientiousness, and openness in relation to performance, and the results revealed that both conscientiousness and agreeableness were positively associated with job performance when rated by the home country's superior. However, non-significant relationships were found between the three dimensions and performance rated by the host country's boss. In addition, Shaffer et al. (2006) highlighted that only openness had a positive significant impact on contextual and overall performance. Likewise, openness (to host nationals) was found to be a valid significant predictor of overseas (production, managerial, and environmental scanning) performance (Cheng and Lin, 2009). Other scholars demonstrated that conscientious expatriates tended to perform well in the task and assignment-specific dimensions, whereas those with open to experience personalities were more prone to perform well in the task, contextual, and assignment-specific dimensions (Rose et al., 2010). Also, extroverted expatriates were found to be proficient in their overall performance, but not open to experience expatriates (Bruning et al., 2012). In their meta-analysis, Mol et al. (2005) bolstered the predictiveness of extroversion, agreeableness, conscientiousness, and emotional stability on expatriates' performance, while openness was not a significant predictor. Contrary

to all the previous empirical findings, Lee and Sukoco (2010) stipulated that neither of the five personality traits had a direct significant impact on expatriates' performance in the host country.

Consequently, some scholars tried to consider some mediators that might transmit the effect of personality traits on performance. For instance, Bhatti et al. (2013b) theoretically proposed that the three facets of expatriate (work, interaction, and general) adjustment might serve as potential mediators in the personality-performance relationship. However, the empirical research results are still mixed and uncoherent, providing support for some, but not all the three facets. For example, a study by (Ramula et al., 2010) found that conscientious and open expatriates were a better task and contextual performers via work and interaction adjustment, whereas Shaffer et al. (2006) unfolded that only openness was directly related to overall and contextual performance and indirectly through work adjustment (in study 1). Another mediator, such as operational capability (i.e., ability to tolerate stress and establish good relationships and communicate with local hosts), was found to partially mediate the personality-performance relationship (Lee and Sukoco, 2010). Another personality feature that was linked to expatriates' performance was self-monitoring. Caligiuri and Day (2000) provided support for the direct significant effect of self-monitoring on both task and assignment-specific performance, such that low self-monitoring expatriates were better rated on the former and high self-monitoring were better rated on the latter. Conversely, Kim and Slocum (2008) found that neither work nor interaction adjustment mediated the self-monitoring-performance relationship because self-monitoring was not directly and significantly related to job performance.

Recent research showed that expatriate performance was positively driven by proactive and self-control personalities (Lauring et al., 2019). Additionally, expatriates with goal-oriented

personalities were more likely to yield higher job performance via the mechanism of work adjustment (Wang and Takeuchi, 2007). Personal affectivity was also regarded as one of the individual differences aspects pertaining to expatriate personality (Lazarova et al., 2010), which positively influenced expatriates' perceived performance (Stoermer et al., 2020).

### **2.9.2.3.2. Dynamic Traits and Performance**

Not only expatriates' stable traits but also their dynamic capabilities (cultural flexibility, task-leadership oriented, people-leadership oriented, and ethnocentrism) have been examined as determinants of performance. More specifically, Shaffer et al. (2006) reported that: (1) cultural flexibility was strongly associated with contextual and task performance (in study 2), and only task performance (in study 3); (2) task-leadership orientation did not predict task performance, whereas people-leadership orientation significantly predicted both contextual and task performance (in study 2); (3) ethnocentrism was significantly and negatively associated with contextual performance (in study 3); and (4) when mediated by adjustment facets, work adjustment fully mediated the relationship between people-leadership orientation and overall performance (in study 2), whilst ethnocentrism was indirectly related to contextual performance (in study 3).

Cultural intelligence (CI) is another important dynamic trait that, according to Mol et al. (2005), has been seldom tested in relation to expatriate performance. In this regard, there exist two competing streams of research. One stream underpinned the direct positive association between CI and expatriate performance (Ang et al., 2007; Ramula et al., 2012; Sambasivan et al., 2017; Setti et al., 2020). On the other hand, the second stream revealed that there was no direct significant influence of CI on expatriate performance, and such a relationship should be sequentially mediated by adjustment and cultural effectiveness (Lee and Sukoco, 2008) or just

mediated by adjustment as a whole or some of its dimensions (Abdul Malek and Budhwar, 2013; Nunes et al., 2017; Chew et al., 2019).

Ultimately, another line of inquiry conceptually and empirically emphasised that a self-efficacious personality was essential for boosting performance (Claus et al., 2011; Bhatti et al., 2013a; Shen and Jiang, 2015).

### **2.9.2.3.3. Expatriate's Abilities and Performance**

Holopainen and Bjorkman (2005) suggested that expatriates should possess certain abilities (communicational and relational abilities) to better perform in their international assignments. Their empirical findings concluded that only communicational ability was positively associated with self-rated and supervisor-rated performance. In the meantime, besides expatriates' independent decision-making ability, the relational ability (i.e., ability to establish social relationships and willingness to communicate with local hosts) was regarded as a significant antecedent of expatriate overseas performance (Cheng and Lin, 2009).

Furthermore, cultural sensitivity (i.e., the ability to positively grasp and appreciate cultural differences) was also examined as a predictor of performance, but results were conflicting. One empirical evidence demonstrated that there was no direct effect of cultural sensitivity/awareness on expatriates' overseas performance (Cheng and Lin, 2009), whilst another one unveiled that both were positively associated by means of adjustment (Bhatti et al., 2013a).

Another aspect pertaining to abilities was the host country language proficiency that was found to significantly facilitate overall performance (Kim and Slocum, 2008). The lack of this ability also significantly inhibited contextual performance (Kraimer and Wayne, 2004). Used as a

control variable without being the main focus, language ability facilitated task performance but not contextual performance (Kawai and Strange, 2014).

#### **2.9.2.3.4. Expatriate Demographics and Performance**

Some expatriation scholars also noticed that expatriates may vary in their demographic features that seemed to influence their performance. Often frequently included in the literature were age, gender, and prior international experience. For example, Selmer, Luring, and Feng (2009) found that age was a significant positive predictor of contextual performance but did not predict expatriate-specific and overall performance. However, Shi and Franklin (2014) captured no significant differences among different ages in relation to performance.

As for gender, some studies uncovered that male and female expatriates were not significantly different in terms of the supervisor-rated (Caligiuri and Tung, 1999) and co-worker-rated performance (Sinangil and Ones, 2003). Consistently, another evidence showed that although female expatriates were not assessed significantly lower than male expatriates on job performance, male expatriates were rated significantly higher when assessed by the same-sex dyad (i.e., male supervisors) (Connerley, Mecham, and Strauss, 2008). On the other hand, another contradictory evidence unveiled significant differences for both genders in their performance (i.e., females outperformed males) (Shi and Franklin, 2014).

Concerning the prior international experience-performance linkage, a meta-analysis by Mol et al. (2005) and the study by Shi and Franklin (2014) attested that prior international experience was not significantly related to expatriate job performance. Additionally, other researchers highlighted that prior host country experience was indirectly related to performance via a very

small negligible effect of work and interaction adjustment (Kim and Slocum, 2008), and the three facets of adjustment (Bhatti et al., 2013a).

#### **2.9.2.4. Expatriate's Social Network Characteristics and Performance**

Some studies devoted considerable attention to the characteristics of expatriates' social networks. In wang's (2002) conceptual model, five structural characteristics were identified: size (total number of peer expatriates, local colleagues, and friends), diversity (similarity among different kinds of actors, such as local colleagues and peer expatriate, and men and women partners), density (actual-to-possible ties ratio), closeness (strength/intensity of the bilateral relationship between the expatriate and each person in his/her network), and frequency (frequency of contacts/meetings). These five features were proposed to directly associate with expatriates' psychological well-being. Wang further argued that these five characteristics might interact with some antecedents (individual, organisational, and cultural) to affect expatriates' psychological well-being, which consequently might influence expatriates' performance. Another conceptual model developed by Osman-Gani and Rockstuhl (2008) suggested that if expatriates' social network comprised many high-performing peers in the host culture, their performance would be high, especially when the strength of these ties was high.

As for empirical research, Bruning et al. (2012) found no support for the influence of network features (size, density, frequency, and closeness) on expatriate overall performance. On the contrary, Liu and Shaffer (2005) unfolded that network density was significantly associated with task performance, and network depth was significantly related to task and knowledge transfer performance.

Although the majority of studies focused extensively on expatriates' abilities and willingness to socially network with local hosts to receive social support, very few studies considered the other side of the coin. Specifically, Liu and Shaffer (2005) examined the HCNs' intercultural competencies/abilities (interpersonal skills, cultural empathy, and personal traits) on expatriate performance. The results revealed that neither host nationals' personal traits nor their interpersonal skills had any significant impact on performance, whilst their cultural empathy strongly predicted relational and knowledge transfer performance.

Although some of the previous empirical literature attempted to address expatriates' social networks/ties in relation to performance from a social capital perspective, other accounts considered expatriate links/ties from a job embeddedness perspective. For instance, Andresen (2015, p.64) argued that job embeddedness contended with three kinds of ties in the organisation and community, which might impact expatriates' performance and retention in the international assignments. These three ties included: (1) links (i.e., formal and informal relations with co-workers at workplace or non-work friends in the external community); (2) fit (i.e., expatriate's compatibility with the work environment in terms of expatriate's personal values-organisation fit at the organisational level and his/her comfort with the general culture of the host community); and (3) sacrifice (i.e., "perceived cost of material or psychological benefits upon leaving one's job, such as lost good relationships with the local colleagues in the organisation or neighbourhood linkages in the community"). The results asserted that organisational and community (job) embeddedness had a positive significant influence on their job performance, such that the higher the job embeddedness was, the higher their performance would be (Andresen, 2015).

### **2.9.2.5. Expatriate Adjustment and Performance**

The adjustment-performance relationship has been discussed earlier (see section 2.3.4.2).

### **2.9.2.6. Expatriate Attitudinal Factors and Performance**

Some studies regarded expatriates' affective commitment as a main attitudinal construct that was linked to expatriates' performance (Takeuchi et al., 2009; Kawai and Strange, 2014). Some empirical studies lent potent support for the positive influence of affective commitment on expatriates' performance (Qin and Baruch, 2010; Hechanova et al., 2003; Takeuchi et al., 2009; Kawai and Strange, 2014). Unlike the previous studies, Kraimer and Wayne (2004) categorised commitment into two aspects: commitment to the parent company and commitment to the foreign subsidiary. They found that commitment to the foreign subsidiary facilitated contextual performance; however, the commitment to the parent company had no significant effect on task performance.

More recently, researchers examined whether boundaryless mindset, as an attitudinal variable, might predict expatriate task and contextual performance through the mechanism of proactive resource acquisition tactics. The results showed that this mechanism fully mediated the relationship between boundaryless mindset and task performance, and partially mediated the relationship between boundaryless mindset and contextual performance (Zhao, Liu, and Zhou, 2020).



## **2.10. Conclusion**

This chapter conducted a review of the extant literature related to the main constructs under investigation in the present study. Specifically, it discussed the definitions, theoretical approaches, and prior theoretical and empirical research related to each of the main constructs. The outcome of this review uncovered the existence of some research gaps in the current body of expatriation literature. A summary of the generic analysis and reflection on the literature related to each construct is provided in the following table:

Table 2.3: Analysis and Reflection on the literature review

Constructs	Generic Pointers
ID	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• ID does matter for MNCs’ major investment decisions broad (e.g., entry modes, entry structure) and performance. The majority of empirical research has been extensively hilted towards the flaws of ID by magnifying its negative effect. Thus, some studies included some firms’ characteristics, such as experience, as moderators to alleviate such as negative impact. Notwithstanding, other studies investigated ID as a moderator. But, whatever the stance of ID either a predictor or moderator, the empirical results stipulated its significant effect. However, in some cases, the results relating to the influence of ID on the HRM practices transferability are still not convergent and quite mixed.</li> <li>• The conceptualisation, measurement, and level of analysis of ID were conducted at the country or macro level in the majority of studies, thereby paying few considerations for the phenomenon on the individual level. It is noteworthy to acknowledge that the study by Ramsey (2013) has taken the initiative to conceptualise and measure the concept at the individual level. In particular, she investigated the impact of ID on the international business travellers’ job strain. In doing so, she paved the way for future researchers to capitalise on her valid measurement.</li> <li>• Although a substantial bulk of research allocates considerable attention to the relationship between ID and organisational outcomes/performance of MNCs’ foreign subsidiaries in the IB literature in general, the influence of ID on the individual level outcomes is still under-researched in the expatriation field in particular. Even though some of the reviewed studies examine the impact of ID on expatriates’ staffing strategies, the expatriation literature, to date, suffers from a scant knowledge on whether ID may have explanatory power on explaining expatriates’ behaviours, attitudes, perceptions, or performance, with the only exception for Ramsey’s (2005) and (2013) studies. According to the researcher’s best of knowledge, the latter two studies are the first ones to address ID in the expatriation literature by associating ID with expatriates’ adjustment and job outcomes. However, how ID may exacerbate and configure expatriates’ psychological feelings of deprivation is still an overlooked issue/topic.</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Hence, it is very fruitful to pay greater attention to this topic that is expected to enrich the extant expatriation literature, especially because some institutionalists, such as North (1990) and Scott (2014), all supported the notion that institutions not only affect organisations but also influence individuals' attitudes and behaviours. In this regard, the current study is very passionate and interested in bridging this gap. More specifically, drawing on the two integrated theories, namely the RDT and the SDT, the present study speculates that ID may trigger expatriates' deprivation with respect to the three essential needs, including autonomy, competence, and relatedness in the host country compared to their home one. This is because ID between expatriates' home and host countries may trigger the mechanism of self-comparison between the two settings and lead to P-E misfit, which collaboratively may induce job deprivation.</li> </ul>
Expatriate Adjustment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Adjustment has been the most frequently investigated phenomenon in expatriation research until to date. Different theoretical approaches have been utilised to understand the antecedents and consequences of adjustment, with the "stressor-stress-strain" as the dominant theoretical approach. Also, the tripartite taxonomy of adjustment developed by Black and Stephens (1989), which includes general, interaction, and work adjustment, remains the hegemonic and most extensively used model. However, the empirical literature has provided evidence for the superiority of both work and interaction adjustment relative to general adjustment in predicting outcomes. Thus, the present study focuses on the former two dimensions while developing the hypothesised relations and measuring this concept.</li> <li>Overall, empirical research provides support for the significant effect of adjustment on myriad outcomes, such as expatriate's attitudes, behaviours, and performance. Although prior studies stipulate that adjustment reinforces job satisfaction and alleviates job strain, there is still less knowledge on whether adjustment may dwindle job deprivation regarding competence, relatedness, and autonomy, which will be addressed in the present study.</li> </ul>
Job Deprivation and the two integrated theories: RDT and SDT	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Both social comparisons (others referents) and self-comparisons (self-referent) are significant mechanisms for triggering RD, although social comparisons are more salient in the majority of the studies relative to the latter in both the social psychology domain and the few studies displayed in the management field. Thus, it seems that the "self-referent" approach has received limited consideration at the workplace setting despite its importance on the individual-level analysis. It is expected that the self-referent</li> </ul>

	<p>approach is more relevant to use in the current study's context because expatriates fill in key prestigious positions/vacancies in the foreign subsidiaries in Egypt relative to local colleagues. Therefore, expatriates are more likely to compare their host jobs features to their previous home ones rather than comparison with local colleagues. In the latter, job deprivation may be less likely to be experienced by expatriates.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The integration between the RDT and SDT was first introduced in the expatriation literature by Ren et al. (2015), who examined the impact of expatriates' job deprivation of autonomy, competence, and relatedness due to social comparisons with local colleagues on thriving on international assignments. Although the current study's idea is built on their study, it is quite distinctive from Ren and her peers' study in two ways: (1) the current research will adopt the "self-referent" approach that is still under-researched, and (2) it endeavours to uncover the left-hand side of expatriate deprivation regarding the three psychological needs (i.e., the reasons/factors contributing to RD). In other words, it attempts to examine whether ID (regulatory, normative, and cultural distance) and adjustment may affect expatriates' perceived job deprivation with respect to these three needs, as the previous review of the RDT, the SDT, and adjustment literature supports the overlooked potential link between both ID and adjustment, and relative deprivation regarding these three needs.</li> <li>• The satisfaction of the three psychological needs or even some of them promotes several aforementioned work-related outcomes. However, the novel concept of thriving is still under-researched, except for Ren et al.'s (2015) study. Although expatriate's job deprivation regarding these three needs and thriving were firstly related in their study, they called future researchers to re-examine it to enhance the generalisability of such a relationship. Moreover, Ren and associates' (2015) results conflicted with those of the domestic research regarding the impact of the satisfaction of these needs on work outcomes. Thus, the present study is passionate to re-examine it among a different sample of expatriates in the Egyptian context.</li> </ul>
Thriving	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Thriving has been well-examined in Western societies (e.g., USA and Europe) and Asian countries (dominated by China and Pakistan). However, very few studies considered employees' thriving in the MENA region (with exception Turkey and Israel), with no attention to Arab countries, such as Egypt. As for context, thriving has been well-investigated on employees in the domestic</li> </ul>

	<p>context in 48 studies of the 50 reviewed articles, except for the two studies by Ren and colleagues (2015) and (2021), who investigated expatriates' thriving as an essential indicator of their success in the international context.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Thriving is a novel construct and research on it is still in its infancy. Although Spreitzer and colleagues' (2005) theoretical model of thriving has competently identified some important individual and contextual factors that are conceived to be crucial in predicting thriving and its outcomes, it also paved and enlightened the way for subsequent researchers to empirically test it, along with exploring new individual (e.g., stable and dynamic personality traits, etc) and contextual (POS, leadership, job factors, etc) factors that could lead to thriving. However, the majority of empirical work has extensively focused on contextual factors compared to individual factors. Also, thriving has been empirically proven to be an optimal predictor of numerous work-related outcomes. However, the review made it abundantly evident that expatriate knowledge sharing willingness and assignment renewal have not been previously examined as thriving outcomes. Additionally, although the relationship between thriving and job performance has been documented in the domestic literature, it is still fruitful to examine it in the expatriation context for comparison purposes. The same applies to the relationship between PsyCap and thriving that has been domestically confirmed.</li> </ul>
Cross-cultural PsyCap	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The review has proven the importance of PsyCap because of its salutary direct role in promoting favourable outcomes and buffering undesirable ones in the domestic work setting. Very limited attention has been devoted to CC-PsyCap in the international domain, and to the best of knowledge, CC-PsyCap has not been examined before on a particular cohort of expatriates in a published study to date. Although the previous few studies have shown how PsyCap served a moderating role in alleviating the influence of stressors on work outcomes, the review by Newman et al. (2014) alluded to some studies that found stressors depleting PsyCap. Therefore, they forward a call for future researchers to conduct further research to confirm whether PsyCap really dampens the impact of different challenges faced by individuals or being impacted by situational stressors. Therefore, the present study will examine the moderating role of CC-PsyCap in the relationship between job deprivation and thriving, along with its direct relationship with thriving.</li> </ul>
Willingness to share tacit-knowledge	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The characteristics of both knowledge sender and receiver have been comprehensively discussed, with an extensive emphasis on the intra-organisational and inter-organisational levels. However, some other personality traits are still under-researched. For example,</li> </ul>

	<p>more attention should be devoted to the role of the big five personality characteristics (extroversion, openness, emotional stability, conscientiousness, and agreeableness) to better understand the process dynamics at the individual level.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Although myriad studies discussed the role of social capital in promoting the KT, few studies (e.g., Bozkurt and Mohr, 2011; Gooderham et al., 2011) considered the factors that helped to develop social capital for KT purposes. Therefore, more emphasis should be placed on identifying the organisational and contextual factors that may develop social capital.</li> <li>• Whilst some scholars have investigated some contextual factors, such as intrinsic and extrinsic motivation, teamwork, flexibility, culture distance, and autonomy, as determinants of KS, there is still a dearth of knowledge regarding whether thriving may be a potential predictor of expatriates' willingness to share knowledge. Therefore, the present study will address this novel relationship.</li> <li>• The majority of studies have overwhelmingly oriented toward using quantitative methods, with minimal attention to the importance of the qualitative or mixed methods. Besides quantitative methods, qualitative studies may provide a richer and deeper understanding and interpretation of the factors contributing to KS. For example, there is a very salient inconsistency among the results concerning the influence of intrinsic/extrinsic motivation and CD or the host country's institutional context on KS. Accordingly, mixed methods are envisaged to be very useful in these cases, as some qualitative data may help to interpret the non-significant quantitative results based on the context, thereby helping the explanation of these mixed results.</li> </ul>
Willingness to renew the current assignment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Due to the novelty of this concept, the present study has capitalised on reviewing the literature on assignment completion that is categorised into two dominant streams. One has a negative view that contends with expatriates' cognitions of withdrawal and premature repatriation from the current assignment before the end of its term. The other has a limited positive view that focuses on expatriates' current assignment completion intention or actual retention until the end of the assignment. Although adjustment was found to be the frequently cited reason underlying the previous outcomes, Ren et al. (2015) shifted attention to thriving as a significant determinant of actual retention. Departing from the previous two dominant views, the present study tends to adopt a more positive insight by introducing the novel concept of current assignment renewal willingness/intention and examining it as an outcome of thriving; the relationship that has not been investigated before.</li> </ul>

Expatriate Performance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Expatriate performance has been adequately examined in Western societies (e.g., USA and Europe) and Asian countries (dominated by China and Malaysia). However, very few studies considered expatriate performance in the MENA region, with very limited attention particularly to Arab countries (except for 3 studies on expatriate performance in Saudi Arabia and the UAE), such as Egypt.</li> <li>• Some divergent results did exist in several relations. For example, the inconsistent relationship between stable personality traits and performance, which might be ascribed to several reasons. One potential reason is the adoption of different measurement scales for the same construct. For example, Caligiuri (2000) drew on Hogan and Hogan's (1992) personality inventory, whereas Lee and Sukoco (2010) and Shaffer et al. (2006) employed Mount and Barrick's (1995) and Goldberg's (2000) inventories, respectively. However, it should also be noted that the same personality dimension might have a differential (positive, negative, or non-significant) effect simultaneously on different dimensions (Caligiuri and Day, 2000). Another potential explanation may be the lack of consideration for the context of performance rating. For instance, when performance was assessed by supervisors, some factors could influence this, such as rater-ratee relationships, demographic (age and gender) differences, and nationalities (Caligiuri and Day, 2000), home vs host supervisor (Dalton and Wilson, 2000), and self vs other assessors (Mol et al., 2005). One example of this consideration was that Caligiuri used supervisor-rated performance, whilst others (Lee and Sukoco, 2010; Ramula et al., 2010) employed self-reported performance. The third explanation may be the existence of cultural differences in performance evaluation (Thomas and Lazarova, 2012).</li> <li>• Some of the previous reasons could apply to explain the discrepancy that existed regarding the adjustment-performance relationship. But what is evidently noted is that self-reported data is stronger than other-reported in capturing the relationship.</li> <li>• Although several individual, organisational, attitudinal, and contextual factors seemed to act as predictors of expatriate performance, there is still a confirmed dearth of research regarding thriving as a potential predictor of expatriate performance in the international context, which will be investigated in the present study.</li> </ul>
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## **Chapter Three: The Egyptian Context Analysis**

### **3.1. Introduction**

This chapter aims at scrutinising the Egyptian national context and delineating the key characteristics of the institutional and cultural environment of Egypt as a host country for many MNCs. Some institutionalists claim that national factors, such as legal systems, governance, and economics, collaboratively constitute the national business system and such factors represent the key differences in the HRM practices and policies across nations (Leat and El-Kot, 2007). This implies, as outlined by Budhwar and Sparrow (2002, p.377), that the national HRM practices and policies are likely to be affected by both “culture-bound” and “culture-free” factors. In other words, the cultural and institutional arrangements’ impact on managerial behaviours is difficult to be alienated. This means that expatriates’ behaviours and attitudes at workplace (i.e., MNCs) may be influenced by the Egyptian context. This chapter is composed of the following key elements:

### **3.2. Egypt’s Geographic and Demographic Profile:**

The Arab Republic of Egypt is an Islamic country, which is located in the centre of the Middle East region (Parnell and Hatem, 1999), and its distinctive strategic location makes it an attractive hub for foreign companies to conduct their business operations and activities in the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) region (AlexBank and Srm, 2016). Egypt is ranked as the third crowded country in Africa and the Arab world, as its total population reached approximately 106,437,241 in July 2021, and roughly 95% resides centrally in only 5% of the total Egyptian land area, notably in the narrow-fertilised region along the River Nile perimeter (The World FactBook, 2021). Whilst the remaining area of Egypt remains uninhabited or desert



(AlexBank and Srm, 2016). This rapid growth in the population count imposed limited employment opportunities, natural resources, accommodation, health care, and education (The World FactBook, 2021). Egypt is composed of 27 governorates and Cairo is its capital. Arabic is the first formal language; however, French and English languages are widely taught and comprehended through educational classes (Khedr, 2011). Islam is the hegemonic religion espoused by 90% of the Egyptian citizens, whereas other religions, including Christianity, account for only 10% of the population (AlexBank and Srm, 2016).

### **3.3. Economic and Legislative Context:**

The Egyptian Economy has witnessed significant fluctuations in its indicators during the past decades, especially before and after the 25<sup>th</sup> January 2011 revolution. Before this revolution, there was an increase in the real gross domestic product (GDP), real per-capita income, and FDI (Lotfy et al., 2010). This was attributed to the procedures conducted by the Egyptian Cabinet for improving the private investment climate (Abdel-Latif and Schmitz, 2010)<sup>35</sup>. However, by the advent of the 2011 revolution and political upheaval, the Egyptian macroeconomic indicators were adversely impacted (Ministry of Trade and Industry, 2016). These indices displayed a significant drop in the real GDP growth rate to 2%, which, in turn, resulted in a remarkable rise in unemployment rates to reach 13% compared to 8% before 2011 (Ministry of Trade and Industry, 2016). According to the Egyptian Centre of Economic Studies (ECES, 2011), the stock market plummeted severely, as both the EGX100 and EGX30 indices dropped by 14% and 10.5%, respectively for the period between January and March 2011. The

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<sup>35</sup> For more details on the Egyptian economic indicators before 2011 revolution, please see note (1) in section (A) of the OA of chapter (3) at: [Press here](#)

inflation rate index recorded 9.7% (Ministry of Trade and Industry, 2016), and this rate was extrapolated to evolve until reaching 17% in 2017 (World Bank, 2016). This collapsed economic environment was the reason for cutting off the foreign investments because of some foreign investors' leave, causing an outflow of 163.6 million US Dollars (OECD, 2014).

Since the upheaval of the 2011 revolution, the budget deficit had an ongoing rise at a higher pace due to the growth in the government's expenditures relative to its revenues, especially during the period 2011-2013. Consequently, in 2014, the Egyptian economy commenced to improve and perform satisfactorily because the government has undertaken numerous measures to restore growth rates before the revolution, regain the foreign investors' trust, minimise the debt levels, and alleviate the budget deficit. In particular, the government conducted the Egypt Economic Development Conference (ECDC) that hosted more than 2500 investors from 80 countries. This event witnessed the signing of multiple investment deals, accounted for 60 billion US Dollars (OECD, 2014).

Additionally, the government decided to start an incremental downsize in the energy subsidies and increase tax revenues via the Value Added Tax system application to lessen the overall budget deficit. As a result, the aggregate budget deficit declined to 11.5% in 2014 compared to 12.2% in 2013 (AlexBank and Srm, 2016). However, the recent adjustments undertaken in the fuel prices and taxation system might be conducive to higher inflation rates in the short run, thereby worsening extremely vulnerable groups (i.e., poor people) in lagging regions (World Bank, 2016). The Egyptian governments' efforts were not constrained to this limit. Additionally, President Abdel Fattah Al-Sisi launched his initiative for undertaking several economic reforms via conducting mega projects. The most prominent megaproject is the New

Suez Canal<sup>36</sup> that was inaugurated in 2015 within a span of one-year time, aiming at establishing reliable “maritime shipping services” and developing the Suez Canal Corridor to transform the region bordering the Canal into a world-class industrial and logistical hub to serve both the Asian and European markets (AlexBank and Srm, 2016). For further developments in the Suez Canal Zone, a memorandum of understanding was signed between Egypt and China, which included allocating 15 billion US Dollars of the Chinese investments to establish several collaborative projects to support investments in inland transport and maritime facilities (UNCTAD, 2017). A recent report issued by the Egyptian-British Chamber of commerce (2016) highlighted that the Egyptian economic rebound in 2014/2015 could be traced back to the restoration of political stability post-revolution<sup>37</sup>.

However, based on the World Bank’s (2018) report, it was indicated that Egypt’s rank declined to 133 (out of 190 countries) compared to 94 (out of 183 countries) in 2011 in terms of ease of doing business. It is pointed out that the governmental bureaucracy and political instability occupy the two major concerns experienced by foreign investors in doing business in Egypt (Ali, 2016). For instance, property registration entails investors going through several costly and time-consuming procedures (OECD, 2014). Therefore, President Abdel Fattah Al-Sisi, the chair of “Egypt’s Supreme Investment Committee”, has approved a new investment law in 2016, after being revised by the Egyptian Parliament (UNCTAD, 2017). This new law targeted

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<sup>36</sup> Megaprojects are not limited to the New Suez Canal but include the “Golden Triangle Project”, the “Northwest Suez Canal Gulf Development Project”, the “Northwest Coast Development” and the “New Administrative City Project”, etc (see Flanders Investment and Trade Market Survey, 2018).

<sup>37</sup> Noteworthy to highlight that, in 2016, the trade growth faded due to the foreign currency shortage, thereby curbing the Egyptian production and exports (Egyptian-British Chamber of commerce, 2016). For more details on the procedures implemented by the central bank of Egypt in responding to this issue, please see note (2) in section (A) of the OA of chapter (3) at: [Press here](#)

tackling difficulties faced by investors commencing new projects, providing investment incentives, and solving investors' disputes (AlexBank and Srm, 2016). The overall investment climate is particularly regulated by the General Authority for Investment and Free Zones (GAFI)<sup>38</sup>, reporting to the Ministry of Investment (Amereller et al., 2010).

Another regulatory impediment that may hinder the FDI is the restrictions associated with the entry of foreign personnel (i.e., expatriate employees) working in the foreign companies' subsidiaries. If regulations restrict the employment of foreigners, foreign investors may perceive the host country as an unappealing location where the necessary expertise for a flourishing investment is lacked (OECD, 2014). Generally speaking, in the Egyptian context, the rules organising the relationship between organisations and employees are regulated by the promulgated Law No. 12/2003 (Amereller et al., 2010). In principle, any expatriate who plans to work and live in Egypt must apply for residence and work permits before taking up the vacancy, regardless of being either a self-initiated or organisationally supported expatriate. The Foreigners' Work Permits Office issues the work permit after the Egyptian Ministry of Manpower and Immigration's approval. The work permit issuance is subject to some legal requirements. First, there must be a fit between the job and the foreigner's expertise and qualifications. Second, the foreigner's expertise is actually not available domestically, considering the country's economic conditions and the need for the expertise, with a maximum duration of 3 years<sup>39</sup>. Third, no competition should exist between the foreigner and local workforce. Fourth, the authorised institution is committed to appoint two national assistants holding the same qualifications possessed by the foreigner/technical personnel, train them, and

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<sup>38</sup> For more information on GAFI's role, please see note (3) in section (A) of the OA of chapter (3) at: [Press here](#)

<sup>39</sup> Foreign employees' contracts are restricted to a definite term.

prepare assessment reports periodically regarding their progress (Baker and McKenzie, 2015). In practice, it is not difficult for foreign workers to obtain their work permits for the first time. However, it is very challenging to renew work permits. Concerning the work permit's time processing, Egypt is deemed swifter (6 weeks) in issuing work permits compared to the MENA region average (11 weeks) and the global average (8 weeks) (OECD, 2014).

In adherence to the Labour Law Decree No. 136 of 2003, the number of expatriate employees must not exceed 10% of the institution's total workforce (Baker and McKenzie, 2015). Nonetheless, the 1:9 rule may not apply in specific cases, such as general managers of limited liability companies, employees of representative offices, and managers of branch offices (Amereller et al., 2010)<sup>40</sup>.

### **3.4. Political Economy Context**

In 1952, Egypt has transformed into a republic after the military coup schemed and led by President Gamal Abdel Nasser and his colleagues of the Free Officers (Massoud, 2015). At that time, the Egyptian policy was geared toward promoting capital-intensive industrialisation, and most of the institutions (e.g., industrial factories, insurance companies, and banks) have been entirely nationalised by 1960. The public sector was the dominant and powerful instrument, albeit experiencing the poor economic performance. The whole Egyptian community was demoralised, especially after the defeat occurred in the 1967 war with Israel. After Nasser's demise in 1970, President Sadat was dissatisfied with three aspects that he

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<sup>40</sup> The Egyptian courts considered the board of directors of joint stock companies not to be employees of the companies. Accordingly, those directors are excluded from the 10% of the foreign workers staffing (Baker and McKenzie, 2015). In the Egyptian Free Zones, expatriate workers' percentage may reach 25% of the total staff, and this maximum limit may be exceeded, pending the approval of the government. Additionally, foreigners' employment restrictions are not applicable in the oil and gas industry (OECD, 2014).

decided to reverse, which included domestic socialist policies, Sinai's occupation by Israel, and the relationship with the Soviet Union (Bromley and Bush, 1994). The Egyptian economics and politics, dignity, and self-esteem commenced getting restored after winning the war against the Israeli army in 1973 and liberalising the occupied Egyptian lands (Weiss and Wurzel, 1998). Afterwards, President Anwar Sadat launched his initiative known as "Open Door Policy" or "Infitah". Such a term was often used to depict the political and economic liberalisation among the Arab nations, and it was firstly used in the Egyptian context during the 1970s and 1980s (Ates et al., 2006)<sup>41</sup>.

However, the infitah policy lagged behind the expected benefits projected by the government. The Egyptian economy's contours witnessed an increase in the external debt due to the outstanding imbalance/gap between consumption and production. The inflation rates leaped significantly. Egypt was suffering a severe financial crisis that was alleviated after the "Gulf Organisation for Development" authorised a 12 billion US Dollars grant to rectify the balance of payment deficit (Nagarajan, 2013). During this period, the Egyptian economy depended primarily on the revenues generated from the Egyptian expatriate worker's remittances, oil exports, and Suez Canal revenue (Ates, et al., 2006).

Regarding the income distribution among the different classes of the local community, the liberalisation policy bestowed rich people to make a good avail of such opportunity for themselves and get more wealth. Whilst, the middle class struggled with their stagnated income and prices' increase, and the low class was overwhelmingly burdened with poverty. This, in

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<sup>41</sup> The aim of "Infitah" policy is foreign capital attraction and market liberalisation. For more details on this, please see note (1) in section (B) of the OA of chapter (3) at: [Press here](#)

turn, has resulted in elevated chaos for two consecutive days in January 1977, which ended up with restoring subsidies. From a political scene, despite all the domestic problems, President Sadat shifted his attention to external affairs. He signed a peace treaty with Israel in 1978, which was not favoured by the rest of the Arab nations because he left the Palestinian issue aside. Accordingly, the situation became more sophisticated, as the Muslim Brotherhood (MB) and some other oppositional parties highly criticised President Sadat's foreign policy movements. All such dissents were dealt with extreme repression. Thus, one deviating section of the MB decided to downfall this regime by assassinating Sadat in October 1981.

After that time, the political authority was succeeded by President Hosni Mubarak, who possesses a different personality compared to his predecessors (Nagarajan, 2013). At the beginning of his era, the economy experienced a financial crisis and an increase in external debt (Ates et al., 2006). The major reason for the increase in such a deficit was attributed to the importation, consumerism, and exports' sluggish rates. Accordingly, Amin (1981, p.430) commented on the *infitah* policy as "the open-door policy contains both economic and cultural threats to Egypt. The economic threats are those of dependence on foreign decisions and foreign capital. The cultural threats are the loss of traditional, national values essential to self-esteem, enthusiasm, and creativity." Although Mubarak participated in criticising the *infitah* policy, he had no option except for continuing with the same path as Sadat. His government intervened by developing a "Five Years Plan" (1982-1987), in which a set of policies were implemented to enhance the industrial sector, such as imposing tariffs to protect the local production, minimising taxes on industrial activities, and reducing loans' interest rates. However, this "Five Years Plan" ended up with an economic crisis and Mubarak's regime encountered the same dilemma of the imperative need to cut subsidies but he could not execute

it to avert the same scenario of the 1977's food revolt. Thus, the government maintained spending, and huge amounts of debt were accumulated (Nagarajan, 2013)<sup>42</sup>. To rectify the macroeconomics imbalances in 1987, Mubarak started negotiations with the International Monetary Fund (IMF) to get credit but the IMF imposed severe restrictions, such as halting public spending (Nagarajan, 2013)<sup>43</sup>.

Over the 20 years (i.e., 1991-2010) before the 2011 revolt, high inequality, superabundant corruption, high costs of living, and high feelings of hopelessness forced the government to take aggressive actions against any protestors (Maher, 2011). For instance, the previous reforms agenda was resisted by the trade union, and the government tightly repressed the trade union's leadership. However, the ongoing tensions between labour and trade unions were escalated and many strikes occurred asking for changing Mubarak's regime. The two most prominent social movements were known as "The Kefaya (enough) Movement" and "The April 6 Youth Movement." The former was established in 2004 before running the 2005 elections, and it requested Mubarak to abdicate his dream of his son's succession and stop smoothing the way for him. However, this movement's objectives failed to be accomplished. The latter was instituted in 2008 and led by the Egyptian workers in the textile sector, who suffered from job insecurity, inferior working conditions and low wages, and low living standards due to the privatisation processes. Although this movement faced several repressive

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<sup>42</sup> For more details on the debts issue, please see note (2) in section (B) of the OA of chapter (3) at: [Press here](#)

<sup>43</sup> Egypt was imposed by IMF to implement a structural adjustment programme (SAP) for economic improvement. For more details on this programme and its benefits, please see note (3) in section (B) of the OA of chapter (3) at: [Press here](#)



actions, their continuous efforts were fruitful because they succeeded ultimately in the downfall of Mubarak's potent legacy in 2011 (Kaboub, 2013).

Although the successful execution of the structural adjustment programme was hailed by the IMF and some macroeconomic indicators improved (e.g., inflation rates declined from 21 to 7%), some other negative long-term consequences were overlooked by the IMF, such as high poverty, unemployment rates, and inequality<sup>44</sup>, which resulted from privatisation (Nagarajan, 2013, p.30). This latter programme was assessed by Mitchell (1999), who commented that such a programme was just merely a complex adjustment to the extant relationship between the public and private sectors rather than creating a new private sector.

The speed of selling off the State-Owned Enterprises (i.e., privatisation) increased dramatically between 1996 and 2000, and this issue was the first step to damage the regime's political base and weaken the country's infrastructure. The elite capitalist groups that had close ties with Mubarak were carpetbaggers of the neoliberal economic reforms. Thus, under the slogan "No To Selling Egypt", the Egyptian workers evoked many strikes to threaten privatisation. More specifically, about 1.7 million workers participated in thousands of strikes, in which they reacted antagonistically and expressed their wrath "not only to their higher cost of living but also to the mounting extravagance and conspicuous consumption of the elite" (Dahi, 2012, p.52).

Another good evidence of the rampant corruption in Egypt is the suspicious relationship between authoritarians and businessmen. A study by El-Tarouty (2014) explored the role of

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<sup>44</sup> For more details on these socioeconomic issues, please see note (4) in section (B) of the OA of chapter (3) at: [Press here](#)

businessmen in supporting and surviving Mubarak's prolonged authoritarian regime over 3 consecutive decades. The results emphasised that some businessmen, who established a strong coalition with Mubarak's family, exerted an influence on the state by subjecting policies and amending laws for their interests and self-enrichment, manifested in accumulating huge amounts of illegal wealth and getting involved in the political life in return for enriching Mubarak's family<sup>45</sup> as well. Hence, Mubarak's era was the main reason for depicting Egypt as a state of self-interest, while the citizens' interests came at the end of priorities in his agenda. Therefore, an eruption of a revolution was inevitable.

On 25<sup>th</sup> January 2011, the first spark started in Cairo's Tahrir Square where thousands of Egyptian citizens converged to oppose political repression, relapsing economic conditions, and police cruelty (Nepstad, 2014). This revolt was dominated by the Egyptian youth who was recently recognised as "change agents", as they demonstrated an outstanding ability to transform the political situation and overthrow Mubarak's regime within 18 days (El-Sharnouby, 2012). The political power and management of Egypt's affairs were transferred to the Supreme Council of Armed Forces (SCAF) during this critical transitional state. This decision was widely approved by Egyptians as a whole, given that the armed forces were biased toward the civil protestors' stakes and decided not to exercise any aggressive actions against them until their requests were achieved by the demise of Mubarak's regime on 11<sup>th</sup> February 2011 (Nepstad, 2014). Remarkably, the feelings of fraternisation and solidarity between the

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<sup>45</sup> Such a corrupted relationship between the two parties was named as a "catholic marriage" that caused the state to lose its legitimacy and the political life to be distorted (Ibrahim, 2011).

army and people were widely spread in the Egyptian streets where several discourses were raised, such as “the army and people are one hand” (Ketchley, 2014, p.155).

The political and economic transitional stage post-revolution was very challenging, accompanied by the low quality of life, high poverty, high unemployment rates, and high budget deficit and debts. The interim government expanded its expenditures to handle the political turmoil (Abdou and Zaazou, 2013). It has become evident that the budget deficit<sup>46</sup> is a common phenomenon occurring during any political or economic transitions over the past decades.

Indeed, the Egyptian economy deteriorated during the SCAF’s leadership period due to the lack of experience but the SCAF was able to transfer authority to the first civil president, Mohamed Morsi, after running the 2012 elections. Morsi governed the country for only one year that was worse compared to the SCAF’s one. Because of Morsi’s extreme allegiance to his party “Freedom and Liberty”, the country was positioned between two extreme stances/polars: Islamists and secularists. Moreover, the economic conditions collapsed as well due to the lack of a serious programme for macroeconomic stabilisation (Ghanem, 2016). The Economist (2013) described the economic situation as “Egypt’s economy: Going to the Dogs” because the indicators demonstrated that the foreign reserve depleted from 36 billion US Dollars (pre-revolution) to 12 billion US Dollars, the local currency depreciated by 10%, the

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<sup>46</sup> Torayeh (2015) analysed the key determinants of the Egyptian fiscal deficit over a span of time from 1985 to 2013. It is concluded that the growth in subsidy bills, interest payments, and public wages are the major reasons for the Egyptian fiscal deficit because they outweigh the national revenues. Additionally, political stability and appropriate institutional arrangements (e.g., placing restrictions on the growth of interest payments and subsidy bills) can reduce this fiscal deficit, and any efforts/attempts exerted to curb the institutional corruption are contingent on the political situation.

inflation rates jumped from 5% to 8%, and the unemployment rates increased from 9% to 13% in February 2013. The Egyptians' outrage was evoked after Morsi decided to approve the new constitution via a referendum, regardless of compromising the dissents (Gerbaudo, 2013). It was evident from this new constitution that the MB's attitude toward establishing a civil state in conjunction with the role of the religion was contradictory and inconsistent. They attempted to satisfy some of the public and achieve some private objectives. Thus, their public credibility was damaged and their crackdown became irreversible (Lavie, 2017). This led to the emergence of the mutiny (Tamaroud) movement whose proponents gathered millions of signatures, proclaiming Morsi to relinquish authority and run new presidential elections. Eventually, the SCAF, led by General Abdel Fattah Al-Sisi, met with all the different political parties, and they collaboratively coincided that Morsi no longer had any legitimacy based on the majority of the citizens' request (Ghanem, 2016). Thus, on 3<sup>rd</sup> July 2013, a military coup, supported by the Egyptian revolutionaries, was marshalled to depose Morsi due to the lack of trustworthy leadership and political desperation (Gerbaudo, 2013).

The interim President Adly Mansour (i.e., the president of the Supreme Constitutional Court at that time) was granted the authority, and he further assigned a new temporal government. This new transitional phase declared a new trajectory that focused primarily on halting the previous constitution, issuing a new constitution, and running presidential and parliament elections as well. Simultaneously, the military institution remained the most respected one, and the Minister of Defence, Al-Sisi, began to impress the Egyptian citizens and capture salient and considerable popularity with his charisma, thereby making him a strong eligible competitor to be elected as a president (Ghanem, 2016).

Not surprisingly, in June 2014, Al-Sisi has sworn as the president of Egypt. His “cognitive map” was dominated by achieving some developmental goals that entailed inspiring patriotism and hard work, halting strikes and demonstrations, and embracing work as the sole mechanism to combat unemployment. He also held an optimistic view toward enhancing investment opportunities in Egypt to improve the national economy (Aly, 2014). Regarding the shreds of evidence of the economy’s improvement, most of his efforts to restore political stability and improve the economic conditions since his advent to power were discussed in the previous section.

### **3.5. Sociocultural Context**

Historically, Egypt has a unique enriched culture owed to its long history of civilisation. Egypt, after the Pharos epoch, was subject to the effect of Hellenism, Christianity, and Arabian Islamic Culture at a later stage (Khedr, 2011). According to Parnell and Hatem (1999), Egypt’s culture is described as a mixture of the Middle Eastern, Arabian, and Islamic influences of contiguous communities. However, Egypt’s distinctive culture was shaped by the history of the British and French colonialisms and its strategic location (Hatem, 2006). The Egyptian sociocultural context is discussed based on scholars’ work on the Arab countries in general due to the limited number of studies conducted on the Egyptian context in specific. More specifically, the cultural dimensions are presented drawing on Hofstede et al.’s (2010) work<sup>47</sup>, as it is mainly used in most studies undertaken on the Egyptian culture (see Brown and Attalla, 2002; Hatem, 2006; Parnell and Hatem, 1999; Leat and El-Kot, 2007). Hostede et al. (2010) identified 5 cultural

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<sup>47</sup> Some scholars endorse that Hofstede’s (1980) pioneering work remains the most influential and excessively cited, used, and applied archetype in both the professional and academic disciplines (Kirkman, 2006).

dimensions: power distance, uncertainty avoidance, individualism vs collectivism, masculinity vs femininity, and short-term vs long-term orientation. The classification of the Egyptian sociocultural context based on these 5 cultural dimensions is summarised in the following table:

Table 3.1: The Classification of the Egyptian Sociocultural Context

Cultural Dimensions	Classification of Egypt	Key Features
Power Distance	The Egyptian culture profile is symbolised by <b>high power distance</b> , which means that less powerful individuals accept the societal notion of inequality in power distribution (Hofstede et al., 2010).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Employees are more prone to respect and coincide with their supervisors’ opinions, and they perceive their supervisors as autocratic so that they cannot contradict them (Parnell and Hatem, 1999).</li> <li>• Seniority is highly respected in Arab countries (Leat and El-Kot, 2007).</li> <li>• Power distance is mirrored in the contemporary Egyptian community by the hierarchical stratification (Hatem, 2006).</li> <li>• Power distance is embedded in the Arab societal fabric, as the old traditions of the Arab Bedouin life stress respect and fear from older people who have the power of running the tribes’ meetings, and the final decisions are made by them after consultation (Tayeb, 2005).</li> <li>• Arabs never derogate relatives, and they display high allegiance and respect for their parents and older people (Kalliny et al., 2006).</li> </ul>
Uncertainty Avoidance	Egypt is ranked as <b>high in uncertainty avoidance</b> , which reflects the individuals’ tendency to avoid ambiguous situations (Hofstede et al., 2010).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The rights of both employees and organisations are controlled by formal laws and rules (Parnell and Hatem, 1999).</li> <li>• Arabs are more prone to do the same tasks and duties of their jobs in the same business over time (Leat and El-Kot, 2007). Employees usually follow the rules and procedures in decision-making and they are unlikely to take the initiative on their own. This trait seems to be compatible with the high power distance because superiors are reluctant to allow subordinates to do so (Tayeb, 2005).</li> <li>• Given the high-power distance and uncertainty avoidance indices, Egypt is viewed to have a “high order” culture that tries to alleviate uncertainty/ambiguity and facilitate interpreting and predicting events by providing precise rules and regulations disseminated by the autocratic decision-makers (Khedr, 2011).</li> </ul>

<p>Individualism vs Collectivism</p>	<p>Egypt is classified as a <b>collectivist society</b>, which explicitly means that individuals emphasise integration, harmony, cohesiveness in groups, and close family ties<sup>48</sup> (Hofstede et al., 2010).</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Relationships are given higher priority over tasks’ accomplishment and group loyalty is of utmost importance. Friendship is the backbone of the domestic culture (Parnell and Hatem, 1999), which plays a crucial role not only in social life but in the vocational/professional one as well.</li> <li>• Nepotism and cronyism are common phenomena in the selection and recruitment practices in many Egyptian institutions. The wide prevalence of nepotism is attributed to the inadequate policies and ineffective legal systems that overlook it (Husain and McMullen, 2010).</li> <li>• Egyptians’ commitments toward parents and family affairs transcend their friends and work commitments (Parnell and Hatem, 1999).</li> <li>• To display their strong desire for harmony, “Egyptians hate to say no.” This phenomenon undermines their honesty and integrity from the Western lens. This reflects that saving face is a very important and prevalent quality in the local context (Hatem, 2006, p.205).</li> <li>• Decent qualities are not peculiar from Bedouin Arabs, which are mirrored in their hospitality to strangers lost in the desert (Kalliny et al., 2006).</li> <li>• The potent family system acts as a “social security network” and “shock absorber” for in-family members’ hardships, as the consolidated family provides emotional support for unemployed individuals due to the limited governmental assistance (Husain and McMullen, 2010, p.117)<sup>49</sup>.</li> <li>• It is a big societal stigma for Egyptians to visit psychiatrists, as personal problems are considered confidential matters that should only be confined to family rather than seeking advice from strangers. Again, this supports the crucial importance of social ties in the Egyptian society’s fabric (Husain and McMullen, 2010).</li> </ul>
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<sup>48</sup> Smith et al. (1996) claimed that Hofstede’s (1980) constructs (i.e., individualism vs collectivism) were linked because the significant correlation between them and geographic, economic, and social indicators was established. Individualism and economic development were strongly associated, whereas collectivist societies were found to have lower per-capita income compared to individualist ones. This, in fact, is compatible with the institutional context as noted in the indicators mentioned in section 3.3.

<sup>49</sup> Additionally, those authors justified the collectivist family-oriented aspect from the Islamic third pillar, known as “Zakat”, which stated that Muslims are imposed to pay 2.5% annually out of their wealth to support the needy and poor people.



Masculinity vs Femininity	Egypt was scored as <b>moderate masculine culture</b> , which contends the preference for masculine characteristics (success, assertiveness, and performance) relative to feminine traits (quality of life and personal relations) (Hofstede et al., 2010).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A newborn female is less preferable compared to a newborn male (Husain and McMullen, 2010).</li> <li>• Females encounter segregation in terms of controlling and getting access to resources (El-Laithy, 2003), and their roles are restricted to be child bearers and caregivers (Bruke and El-Kot, 2010).</li> <li>• The percentage of females' involvement in the labour force did not exceed 20% in the Arab nations compared to 44% in the western societies (Al-Shaikh, 2004).</li> <li>• Males are responsible for providing all the necessary life requirements, including food, accommodation, and clothing (El-Said and El-Said, 2012).</li> </ul>
Short-term vs Long-term Orientation	Egypt is categorised as a <b>short-term-oriented society</b> , which means that “virtues of the past and present” are more fostered than future virtues, pertaining to “rewards, perseverance, and thrift” (Hofstede et al., 2010).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Egyptians are described as “polychronic” because of their tendency to execute multiple tasks at the same time with a primary focus on building relationships instead of completing tasks and meeting deadlines.</li> <li>• For Egyptians, time is organic, and not static, and punctuality is loosely defied because some adjustments and delays are expected in meeting deadlines.</li> <li>• The word “Inshaallah” is commonly used in the Egyptians’ speech, indicating an implicit uncertainty in complying with deadlines (Hatem, 2006, p.205).</li> </ul>

As can be noticed from the table above, Egypt is classified as high-power distance, high uncertainty avoidance, high collectivistic, masculine, and short-term oriented cultural society. Although the Egyptian cultural context seems to be masculinity-dominated, the arguments in the extant literature still diverge regarding the fair distribution of gender's role in the Egyptian context. For instance, Sidani and Jamali (2010) examined the females' role in Arab society and how their work was perceived and valued based on gender differences. Their results supported that conservative attitudes were ingrained in the males' realm toward females' work. This implied that females might face fewer opportunities for career development. Concomitantly, they unfolded a contradictory fact that "the Egyptian society witnessed the emergence of the most notable emancipation movements in the Arab world in the twentieth century and has been at the forefront of active feminist movements" (Sidani and Jamali, 2010, p.446). This implicitly means that some feminine values are superficially manifested in the Egyptian culture. Support for this was provided by Lopez-Claros and Zahidi (2005), who demonstrated that the Egyptian females became equalised with males in five critical domains, incorporating political empowerment, economic opportunity, economic participation, health and well-being, and educational attainment. However, the Egyptian society is still perceived by expatriates as masculine, especially with the issue of gender inequality that creates some adjustment problems for them. An American professor in Egypt comments that she suffers from some inequality, just merely for her gender in a masculine society. In this essence, although the masculine values seem to be lower in Egypt compared to other Arab countries, they remain higher relative to western cultures (Khedr, 2011).

Regarding time orientation, Hatem (2006, p.205) highlighted that "Egyptians sometimes move at the own pace according to the Egyptian time", and the word "Inshaallah" is commonly used

in their speech, indicating an implicit uncertainty in complying with deadlines. Rice (1999, p.353) provided a plausible explanation for this cultural trait by suggesting that the political and economic instability might cause individuals to be tensed, pessimistic, and struggling, thereby leading them to sacrifice their ethos in return for securing their needs to survive. Thus, Egyptians are viewed to internalise three cultural features in their behaviours to face their life's problems: "indecision, procrastination, and indifference". They say the word "Inshaallah" and delay what they can do today until tomorrow by saying "Bukra" as if time has no value or cost. Even if costs are substantial, they say "Ma'alesh" (i.e., it does not matter). Not only do these issues cause disappointment and potential job-related problems (e.g., a lack of job interdependence, feeling of incompetency in dealing with the Egyptian host workplace, and lack of relatedness) to Westerners (i.e., expatriates if failed to understand and respect the host colleagues' culture), they contradict with the Islamic principles and ethics that are discussed in the next section.

### **3.6. Religious Context**

Despite the existence of other religions in Egypt, Islam is the hegemonic one for thirteen centuries, and some scholars alluded to its impact on management practices and work-related outcomes (see Parnell and Hatem, 1999; Leat and El-Kot, 2007; Yousef, 2001; El-Kot and Burke, 2014; Husain and McMullen, 2010; Rice, 1999; Sahin and Wright, 2004). It is argued that Islam is an overarching religion encompassing military, political, and social tenets, and it enhances individuals' morality (Leat and El-Kot, 2007). Islam has a fundamental effect on individuals' daily life, and it can be expressed in several artifacts, such as houses' decorations and the Koranic formulas headed on the top of personal letters, reports, and memos, such as "In the name of God, the merciful, the Compassionate" (Parnell and Hatem, 1999, p.404). The

role of Islam is not constrained only to social daily life but its paramount role is permeable to professional and business life as well due to its effect on employees' work-related outcomes and management practices at workplace.

According to Yousef (2001), the Islamic Work Ethics (IWEs) are derived from Quran and Prophet Mohamed (Sunnah). Such ethics induce hard work, honesty, justice, cooperation at work, consultation to avoid committing mistakes, social relations at work to maintain work-life balance, creativity as a source of well-being, and learning and skills acquisition. Conversely, IWEs protest against time waste and laziness, sponge, and being dependent on others' work (Yousef, 2001). Although the IWEs abominate oppression, exploitation, and injustice, some of these traits are entrenched in the authoritarian leadership style that fits the Egyptian case (Rice, 1999). It is also claimed that employees, who embrace the IWEs, may experience high levels of job satisfaction and organisational commitment. In brief, life has no meaning without work (Yousef, 2001). Moreover, El-Said and El-Said (2012) assume that religion ushers leaders' behaviours and helps society to see them as "honourable leaders;" however, this is not the case in the Western communities because they comply with laws and do not experience any social or religious pressures. Additionally, Islam has impacted the business transactions in the financial institutions, namely the banking sector. The last two decades witnessed a rapid expansion in Islamic banking due to financial liberalisation. In compliance with the Islamic Sharia banning interest rates payment, such Islamic banks shifted to adopt profit-sharing, risk-sharing, and equity to be the cornerstone of their operational activities (Rabaa, 2016).

Rice (1999) explored the relationship between Islamic culture and business ethics in the Egyptian context. The results, unfortunately, indicated that there was a large gap between

Islamic philosophy and its application in real economic life. Several examples were given to underpin this result. For instance, one of the Islamic philosophies was unity (non-discrimination at workplace). However, nepotism and social relations played a pivotal role in staffing practices. Therefore, there was a discrepancy between what it (i.e., Islamic philosophy) “should be” and what “it is”. Accordingly, he provided several implications for international managers and MNCs intending to conduct operations in Islamic countries, like Egypt.

Ali (1995) discussed the reasons for Arabs’ violation of such Islamic cultural tenets. He commented that the dualism found in the Arab’s cultural identity is traced back to the external foreign influences (e.g., colonialism and Western political power) that entrenched inferiority feelings in the Arab’s thoughts. Additionally, he provided ample evidence supporting that the institutional environment had a spill-over on individuals’ values and behaviours. For example, an Arab individual in an authoritarian environment was conservative, apathetic, and dependent. Conversely, in a democratic environment, the same person was a risk-taker, thoughtful, and creative. This implied that if democracy prevailed in the Arabian context, not only corrupted leaders would disappear but prosperity and economic progress and the renaissance of creativity would be realised as well (Ali, 1995).

In the same vein, it is postulated that Egyptian employees, managers, and organisations have recently undergone international influences, and this has affected the HR practices and work-related values within the Egyptian organisations. The influx of the FDI succeeded in influencing HRM and individuals’ behaviours at workplace (Leat and El-Kot, 2007). The authors, particularly, stated that the advancements in the Western technology and management approach entailed adopting the social practices and values of the West. From another perspective, it is argued that large numbers of Arab managers were more inclined to travel

abroad for education and training purposes to enhance their capabilities and put the Western management theories into action in their companies (Leat and El-Kot, 2007). This emanated from the Islamic principles that ascertained the necessity of education and skills acquisition.

Another body of literature sheds a spotlight on the influence of Islam on some issues related to women's work in the ME. The results indicated that females' opportunities for career development were extremely overlooked by the HRM policies (Metcalf, 2007), and organisational segregation was salient in the paucity of learning, professional training, and development chances for women managers (Tliass and Dirani, 2015). Although the Islamic religion did not place any restrictions on women's employment or entrepreneurship, cultural processes positioned both men and women in different stances (Metcalf, 2011). Thus, although the majority of Arab countries share similar cultural values and are dominated by the Islamic religion, the gender segregation phenomenon started to diminish over time in some regions (see Mostafa, 2005; Yaghi, 2016). This aligns with the new emerging brand of feminism, dubbed as "Islamic Feminism", which challenges the dominance of the sharia's patriarchal interpretation and focuses on the "reinterpretation of Islamic jurisprudence – a process of rejuvenating egalitarian ethics" (Syed and Metcalf, 2017, p.408). Given the recent developments in women's role in the political and economic transitional phases in some of the Arab spring countries, like Egypt, the authors argued that the growing participation of women in the political institutions and employment during such political-economic alterations might incrementally reform the stereotypes and sociocultural misperceptions about women's role.

Hence, women might become more acceptable and visible in public roles in both business and politics<sup>50</sup>.

Research highlights that it is risky for expatriates to neglect to understand the Islamic culture while managing local staff in Arab countries. For example, expatriates should give local colleagues prayer breaks and not eat/drink in front of them during their fasting time in Ramadan. Failure to do so may result in damaging the working relationships between expatriates and local work peers, as the latter may interpret that expatriates offend them and do not respect their religious rituals (AlMazrouei and Pech, 2015).

### **3.7. Managerial and HR Practices at Workplace in the Egyptian Context**

Budhwar and Mellahi (2007), in their overview of the volume pertaining to the HRM in the ME, highlight that despite the existence of similar management practices and work attitudes in this region, some significant variations still also prevail there, which are not interpretable by cultural factors. They argue that beyond the cultural and religious factors, the HRM practices in this region are shaped by many institutional factors. This section focuses on some managerial practices, such as the leadership and decision-making styles and the HRM practices, which may affect expatriates' attitudes and behaviours in the international (Egyptian) context.

#### **3.7.1. Decision-Making and Leadership Styles**

It is reported that the organisational structure in the ME is influenced by the Western ones, as the flow of authority is hierarchal, following the “Top-Bottom” or “Triangular” style

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<sup>50</sup> For more details on gender segregation issues, please see note (1) in section (D) of the OA of chapter (3) at: [Press here](#)

(Pezeshkpur, 1978). In his study of the Arab executives' decision-making styles, Ali (1993) found that Arab executives' preferences were inclined to both "consultative" and "pseudo consultative" styles. The former is consistent with the conventional tribal and Islamic values and principles, which promote consultation in all life matters. For instance, the tribe's sheikh cannot govern without getting consent from his tribe's members, and his authority is viewed as an arbitrator rather than a commander. Moreover, consultation is conceived by Islam as a "religiously positive behaviour." The latter is completely distinctive from the real consultative one. It usually triggers the question of whether consultation really or nominally exists. This is often referred to as the paradox of the "Arab culture duality" that distinguishes between "wise consultation" and "power-sharing." This paradox reflects the difference between reality and intention. (Sadler-Smith et al., 2003). That is, under the manifestation of consultations, managers prepare subordinates to accept decisions that have already been made (Al-Kazemi and Ali, 2002). This preferred style is attributed to the authoritarian style that is commonly widespread in the Arab social and political contexts. In the contemporary Arab world, most famous businessmen and Arab leaders are more prone to embrace the latter style that matches with their attitudes that support assigning relatives to key positions in the government of organisations; even this violates the Islamic teachings (Ali, 1993).

Apparently, the pseudo consultative style seems to fit the Egyptian environment, and again it reflects the fact that the authoritarian style is derived from the Egyptian institutional context. Parnell and Hatem (1999) argue that the temptation of subordinates' participation is regarded as a sign of the leaders' poor skills, weaknesses, and low integrity. This emanates from the high power distance in Egypt where decision-making authority is highly centralised, and the paternalistic/autocratic managerial style is more likely to be adopted. When the interface



between expatriates and the Egyptian culture was examined within the organisational context, Brown and Ataalla (2002) found that 81% of expatriates confirmed that the Egyptian managers disliked making speedy decisions that were often considered highly personalistic. This trait is also embedded in the bureaucratic institutional context because the government usually takes months or years to announce its final decisions with approval or rejection. Thus, expatriates expressed their discomfort in this regard.

With respect to leadership styles, some commentators claim that the leadership's features are perceived to be culturally conditional (El-Said and El-Said, 2012; Sahin and Wright, 2004). Consistent with the prevalence of the high-power distance culture in Egypt, the most salient leadership style is the authoritarian one because of some geographical and historical reasons (Sahin and Wright, 2004). The previous authors also found that another style corresponds to the Egyptian environment, namely the "bureaucratic leadership." The latter functions with what is known as "blame culture". That is, when something wrong happens, people are blamed for their failure to comply with the rules. Whilst leaders, in such cases, remit themselves from any responsibility. This coincides with the strong effect of the red tape in Egypt (Sahin and Wright, 2004).

The previous results were further supported by Brown and Ataalla's (2002) study, in which 75% of the sampled expatriates evidently remarked on the authoritarian supervisor-employee relationship. They explicated that this trait was historically traced back to the era of Pharaohs. At that time, the country flourished under the rule of the authoritarian Pharaohs, whereas chaos occurred under weak leadership. Moreover, there was a consensus among their sampled expatriates (82%) that superior organisational performance was attributed to the strong leadership because the Egyptian employees are perceived as leaders' followers rather than

systems' followers (Brown and Ataalla, 2002, p.93). Similarly, this paternalistic/autocratic relationship between employees and supervisors accords with Parnell and Hatem's (1999, p.404) conclusion stating that "employees are frequently afraid to disagree with their supervisors, who are often seen as autocratic or paternalistic." Eventually, based on the previous arguments and results, it has become evident that the autocratic managerial practices and the formal climate displayed at workplace within organisations emanate originally from the autocratic nature of the institutional context in Egypt.

### **3.7.2. HRM Practices at Workplace**

It has been acknowledged that there exists a paucity of knowledge about the aspects of HRM practices in the Middle East region. The whole region extremely varies regarding religion, language, ethnicity, economic, and political aspects (Budhwar and Mellahi, 2007; Iles et al., 2012; Afiouni et al., 2014). However, such diversity remains purely descriptive and conceptual in nature so that generalisations are difficult (Afiouni et al., 2014). The latter scholars highlighted that the Arab uprising and the ongoing conflicts misrepresented the region to be perceived as uncertain, volatile, and unattractive in terms of conducting business. Thus, the authors further supported the importance of "contextualising research in HRM" because considering the multifaceted nature of the context might provide a better understanding and interpretations of the individuals' behaviours and the HRM development. Hence, the identification of the HRM's main contours in the ME is of utmost importance.

However, some scholars could portray a picture of the HRM practices and challenges in the ME in general and Egypt in particular. For example, Iles et al. (2012) explored the HRM practices in the public sector by developing a case study about the Middle East Arab to highlight the similarities and differences from the Western models. They argued that the public

sector prioritised local recruitment compared to the private sector that focused on recruiting expatriates. Public organisations tended to employ clearer job description procedures and structured training programmes, and to display lower pay and higher job security compared to the private ones. They also alluded to the gradual decline of job security in the public sector in some countries, like Egypt and Jordan, due to the governments' orientation toward privatisation. In such countries, the private sectors were granted the privilege of discretion in developing their own HRM practices. The low compensation created the problem of high qualified employees' retention and fewer career development opportunities, and the promotion-based seniority inhibited the professionalism in HRM. Additionally, *Wasta* played a crucial role in employees' promotion, compensation, recruitment, and selection in the public sector. Using favouritism and cronyism provided substantial benefits in performance appraisal, salary recommendations, and training places. Even after retirement, some officials relied on their personal connections to satisfy their interests via conducting business or working as consultants (Iles et al., 2012). Ultimately, the same authors concluded that the HRM practices in the ME region suffer from a deficiency in the institutional context regarding several aspects, for example, but not inclusive, the weakness of the entire institutional framework mirrored in corruption and the lack of accountability, the absence of objectivity, fairness, equality, and transparency in the recruitment and selection procedures, and the segregation in training, promotion, compensation, and career development.

A growing body of literature points out that '*Wasta*' is a long-standing social phenomenon that widely exists in the Arab world in different sectors, such as business, academic, health services, and government (Barnett et al., 2013). *Wasta* is considered an important form of social capital that provides privileges for the members of the social networks. However, it is deemed as

“helpful during good times and destructive during bad times” (El-Said and Harrigan, 2009, p.1235). Some empirical studies supported the importance of Wasta in hiring decisions in Lebanon (Ezzedeen and Sweircz, 2001), facilitating job attainment in Jordan (Loewe et al., 2007), and promoting career development in the UAE (Dobie et al., 2002). In the Egyptian context, the usage of Wasta is ubiquitous, although it is important to note that it has negative psychological consequences. Mohamed and Mohamed (2011) postulated that wasta might diminish organisational performance and equal opportunities for jobs occupancy. They also found that non-user employees of wasta (low socioeconomic groups) perceived their counterparts, who were appointed by wasta, as immoral and less competent because they would not attribute such kind of employment to the candidates’ qualifications but rather for social relationships. Consequently, they would see Wasta as a source of corruption that violated Islamic teachings. Similarly, Mohamed and Hamdy (2008) outlined that less qualified candidates were recruited to occupy vacancies, merely based on their social connections and networks. As a result, a frustrated environment was created, particularly for qualified individuals. Not only the practice of wasta had an impact on the recruitment and selection practices, but another stream of research also articulated its importance for Arab managers in the business to business relations and negotiations in IB (Khakhar and Rammal, 2013) and Western companies’ performance and satisfaction with conducting business in Arab countries, like Egypt ( Berger et al., 2015)<sup>51</sup>. Brown and Ataalla (2002) lent additional support for this because 96% of the expatriates in their study ascertained that Wasta was of great importance to do business in Egypt.

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<sup>51</sup> For more details on the embeddedness of Wasta in Arab’s social fabrics and its importance in the IB context, please see note (1) in section (E) of the OA of chapter (3) at: [Press here](#)

To contribute to a better understanding of the recent debate on the HRM in the ME region, Afiouni et al. (2014) provided significant insights via an interesting tour of review of nine highly selected articles covering different HRM topics in five Arab countries. Surprisingly, out of these 9 studies, only one study was undertaken in Egypt by Moustafa and Gould-Williams (2014), who bolstered the importance of using High-Performance Human Resource Practices (HPHRP) in the health and higher education sector because these practices were found to positively affect both organisational citizenship behaviour and employees satisfaction via a partial mediation of person-organisation fit.

Some researchers argued for the absence of a specific HRM model fitting the Middle Eastern countries, given the recognised differences of HRM among the region (Budhwar and Mellahi, 2006; Iles et al., 2012). However, Afiouni et al. (2013) attempted to develop a rudimentary model tailored for the Arab Middle Eastern (AME) HR to depict its contours that are shown in the following figure:

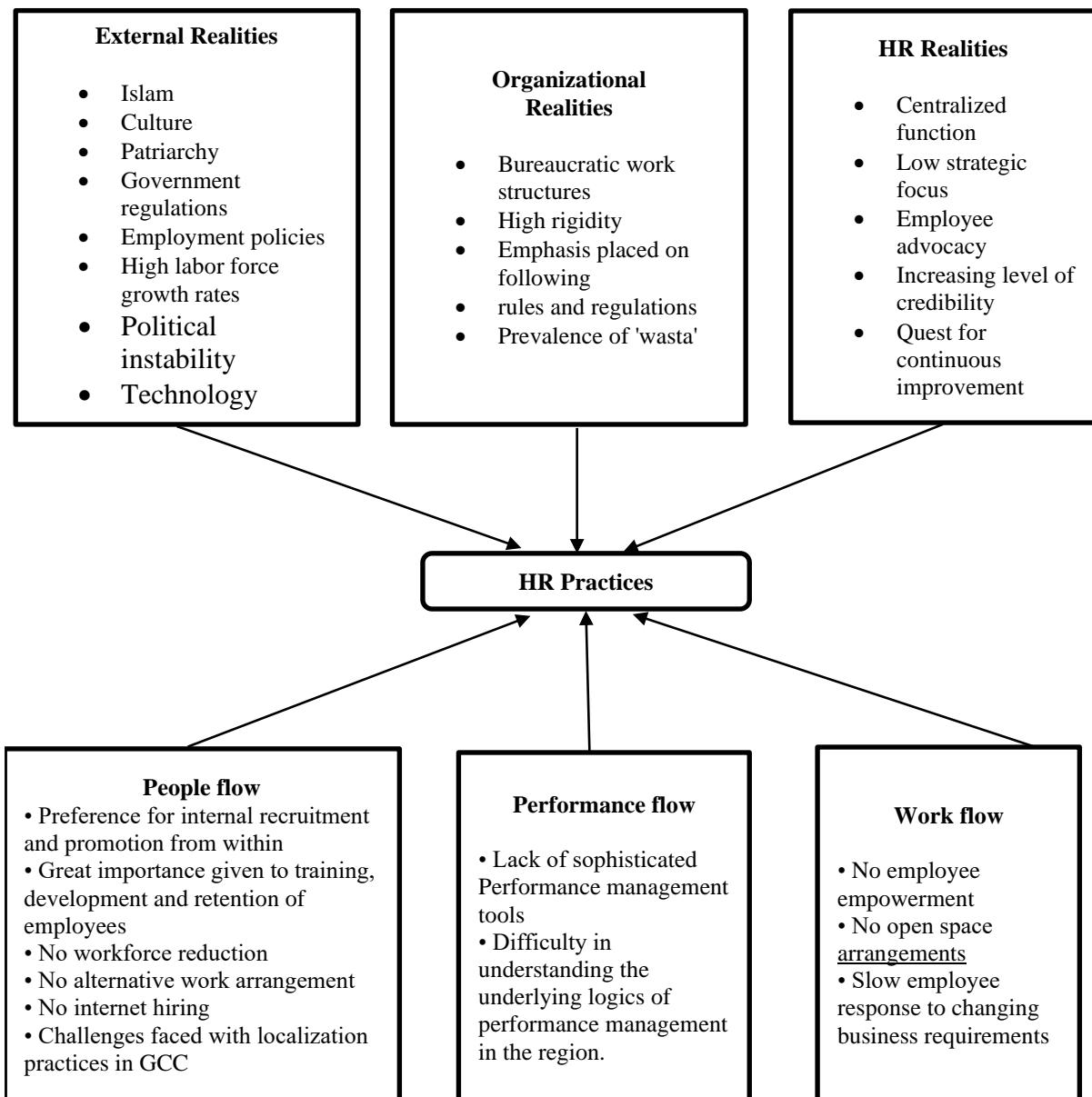


Figure 3.1. The Arab Middle East HR model (Adapted from Afiouni et al., 2013, P.1926).

As can be noticed from the model above, Afiouni et al. (2013) stipulated that this model focused primarily on the HRM practices that seemed to be shaped by an amalgamation of several macro governmental regulations and sociocultural factors, along with the organisational structure and the human resources' role that was envisaged to be oriented towards ensuring an effective

service for employees and people flow. The rationale beyond focusing merely on Arab countries was to reduce the persistent variations within the other Middle Eastern countries with different cultures. However, this emerging model faced the challenge of generalisability because the study's sample size was small compared to the intended/expected.

Interestingly, in the national context of Egypt, local organisations normally implement a range of HRM practices, including “job description, recruitment and selection, training and development, compensation and performance appraisal, and employment security” (Leat and El-Kot, 2007, p.147). The authors examined the impact of the national context on these aforementioned practices. The results indicated that the Egyptian organisations were more inclined to an explicit job description that enabled employees to follow rules smoothly and avoid uncertain situations. This practice emerged from the labour law regulations that stressed the inclusion of job descriptions in the employment contract. Moreover, for filling in vacancies, organisations tended to be internally oriented and placed more importance on job skills rather than person-organisational culture fit in the selection procedures. Concerning training and development, organisations preferred job-specific training, along with developing the required skills internally instead of outsourcing them. Apparently, the inconsistency between organisations' preferences for internal skills development vs job skills priority, while recruiting, can be explained by the legislative constraints upon dismissal and labour market conditions. Furthermore, it was found that the compensation package and increase in payment were no longer contingent on skills and seniority, but rather on job evaluation and performance. Regarding employment security, organisations provided highly secured jobs, consistent with the legal context that acknowledged job security and stability. Finally, outcomes became the main yardstick for performance appraisal instead of processes in order to improve productivity

and efficiency (Leat and El-Kot, 2007). These findings lent further support for the influence of the legal context and local culture on shaping the HRM practices in accordance with Budhwar and Sparrow's (2002) argument that the blended impact of the cultural and institutional context is difficult to be precluded.

Nonetheless, a growing number of concerns have been elevated with respect to the MNCs' practices in the ME region. Due to the limited knowledge about this theme, Mellahi et al. (2011) raised some questions regarding whether MNCs replicate their home country practices or adapt to the host countries' ones in this region. In responding to these issues, El-Kot and Leat (2007) examined whether variations did exist between the Egyptian companies and MNCs regarding the implemented HRM practices. They concluded that both kinds of companies, more or less, adopt similar HRM practices and approaches. With few exceptions, Darrag et al. (2010) found that MNCs might over-rely on external recruitment sources for upper and middle managerial positions relative to their local counterparts using the internal ones in Egypt. One possible justification was given for this is the unavailability/scarcity of the talented, qualified, ambitious, and skilled candidates locally due to poor education and training systems. In the meantime, El-Kot and Leat (2007) mentioned that a limited number of alterations have been captured in some practices, such as changing the criteria for performance appraisal, pay increase, and skills development. These changes could be better explained by the labour market regulation and legal context, as well as, the influence on local organisations by Western managerial practices to improve global competitiveness.

Generally, this assimilates the findings of recent research emphasising that MNCs are not "norm entrepreneurs", but rather followers or even more conservative than local firms with respect to deviance from the domestic recipe (Brookes et al., 2017). From the institutional



theory perspective, this can be justified by the MNCs' strong vigilance to maintain their legitimacy. Thus, when it comes to operating in the unique environment of emerging markets, it does matter for contextually intelligent managers to be aware of the crucial need for institutional adaptation/adjustment by MNCs. It is stated that "such adaptability includes political, economic and social adaptation that allows MNCs to fill institutional voids, adjust to the importance of informal institutions, manage the institutional pressures by local governments, and better deal with institutional change and transitions" (Rottig, 2016, p.9).

### **3.8. Conclusion**

This chapter concludes that some economic and political-institutional changes have been witnessed during the prescribed periods. Three paradigm shifts were experienced in the economic policies. The first shift (1952-1973) was marked by a state-led industrialisation approach, large-scale nationalisation actions, and monopolisation by the public sector. The second shift (1974-1985) was dominated by the open-door policy. The final one (1986-2013) was greatly affected by the Economic Reform and Structural Adjustment Programme, led by the international financial institutions (WB and IMF), which emphasised economic liberalisation and privatisation initiatives. New legislations were introduced, such as Law of Real Estate Mortgage (2001), Laws of money laundering, intellectual property, special economic zones, and export promotion (2002), new Labour Market Law (2003), and Laws of investment, competition, and taxation (2004-2005) (Alissa, 2007). Some of these reforms and laws were supported by the political elites close to Mubarak's regime, who were more concerned about their personal benefits and ignored some severe problems, such as poverty, poor education, and high unemployment rates among youth. These problems constituted the first spark of the 2011 revolution. From 2011 and onward, Egypt has undergone a transitional

stage, followed by political instability and severe economic problems. The period from 2011 until recently witnessed the issuance of a new constitution, irrespective of the one approved by Morsi and abandoned by the military coup in 2013. Recently, under the stewardship of President Al-Sisi, the political stability was restored and the government became more curious and attentive to exert more efforts to improve the economic situation by promulgating the new investment and value-added tax laws and following the necessary corrective actions of the new economic reform programme suggested the IMF in 2016.

Additionally, this chapter endeavoured to highlight the sociocultural features of the Egyptian society that seemed to be different from the Western cultures with respect to the dimensions of power distance, uncertainty avoidance, masculinity vs femininity, individualism vs collectivism, and short-term vs long-term orientation. Also, the religious context was explored to show how Islam has impacted individuals' actions in their social and work life. Eventually, the managerial and HR practices at workplace were discussed, and the literature underpinned that the tendency to embrace specific practices could be explained in the light of the cultural and institutional context. Thus, the managerial practices, cultural, and institutional context in the Egyptian host environment seem to be quite different from the expatriates' ones in their home countries. Thus, ID may exist regarding both formal and informal rules that should be devoted much attention. This ID is of major interest in the current study because it has received little attention from scholars in the expatriation literature, as Ramsey (2005) claimed that ID (at the individual level) between the home and the host country might have a significant impact on expatriates' behaviours, attitudes, and expectations.

## **Chapter Four: Theoretical Framework and Hypotheses Development**

### **4.1. Introduction**

This chapter aims to delineate the theoretical foundations underpinning the development of the envisaged conceptual framework and research hypotheses. This research seeks to answer eight research questions as mentioned in chapter 1. Hence, eight main research hypotheses are developed depending on the key tenets of various theoretical platforms. In this regard, this chapter is split into three sections. The first section utilises the key corollaries of sociological institutional theory complemented with the (P-E) fit theory, and the stressor-stress-strain framework as theoretical bases for explaining the relationship between the two antecedents (ID and adjustment, respectively) and expatriates' perceived job deprivation related to the three needs of relatedness, autonomy, and competence. In this section, research hypotheses are formulated based on theory and some empirical pieces of evidence from the literature that addressed the Egyptian and Arab countries' contexts (i.e., the shreds of evidence captured in the context chapter). The second one displays the principles of the two integrated theories, namely the RDT and the SDT, ending up with developing the theoretical arguments supporting the expected relationship between job deprivation and thriving, considering the theoretical framework of the socially embedded construct of thriving developed by Spreitzer et al. (2015). The third section discusses the tenets of the COR theory (Hobfoll, 1988) as a theoretical lens to explain the moderating role of cross-cultural psychological capital in the relationship between expatriates' perceptions of job deprivation and thriving and its direct role with thriving. The fourth section employs the tenets of "Social Capital Theory" (Nahapiet and Ghoshal, 1998), "Social Exchange Theory" (Homans, 1958; Blau, 1964; Gouldner, 1960), and

“Prosocial Motivation Theory” (Grant, 2007), complemented with the theoretical framework of thriving (Spreitzer et al., 2005), as potential appropriate theoretical perspectives to develop the hypotheses supporting the association between thriving and the three final outcomes (i.e., willingness to share tacit-knowledge, willingness to renew the current assignment, and performance). Eventually, the conceptual framework is depicted to illustrate the directions of arrows and relationships between the research constructs.

## **4.2. The Antecedents of Expatriates’ Job Deprivation**

### **4.2.1 Institutional Theory and Person-Environment Fit Theory**

Institutional theory has gained a prominent interest by international business scholars, as it provides a potent theoretical platform for studies conducted on MNCs’ strategic decisions in emerging markets (Estrin et al., 2009; Hoskisson et al., 2000). It provides a distinctive framework to explicate the influences on corporations’ strategies; as such emerging markets (e.g., Egypt) have less powerful social and governmental influences relative to developed economies (Hoskisson et al., 2000). More specifically, the features of these markets include unreliable market information, underdeveloped, less powerful, and ineffective institutions, and the spacious interventions by governments in business operations, thereby creating challenges for MNCs (Makino et al., 2004).

From a sociological stance, Scott developed an institutional framework, in which institutions are conceptualised as a multidimensional construct that includes “regulative, normative, and cultural-cognitive elements that, together with associated activities and resources, provide stability and meaning to social life” (Scott, 2014, p.56). These three aspects represent the institutional environment of any given country (Kostova, 1997). These three pillars have been explained earlier (see section 2.2.1 in Chapter 2).

Conformity with these three pillars is very crucial for MNCs' subsidiaries that seek to establish and maintain external organisational legitimacy; however, it is worth highlighting that MNCs' subunits encounter more challenges in the informal legitimacy relative to the formal legitimacy (Kostova and Zaheer, 1999). The notion of organisational legitimacy is essential and critical for organisations to survive (DiMaggio and Powell, 1983; Kostova and Roth, 2002; Chan and Makino, 2007). Legitimacy is a central tenet of the institutional theory, which assumes that MNCs' are more likely to adopt isomorphic practices like those employed by other indigenous organisations (Yin and Makino, 2007) to attain legitimacy and alleviate the "liability of foreignness", especially when the distance between the home and the host country is large (Saloman and Zu, 2012). It is defined by Suchman (1995, p.574) as "a generalized perception or assumption that the actions of an entity are desirable, proper, or appropriate within some socially constructed system of norms, values, beliefs, and definitions." Prior scholars propose that although legitimacy is a problematic behavioural impediment, it is not static and changes by the virtue of organisational adaptation or when social values framing legitimacy change (Dowling and Pfeffer, 1975).

Building on Scott's (2014) theoretical framework of the institutional environment, Kostova and Zaheer (1999, p.71) coined the ID concept that signifies "the distance between two countries regarding the regulatory, normative, and cultural-cognitive elements of their institutional environments." Consequently, it is relevant to be used in this research's context because this means that these three pillars can be employed to capture the distance between Egypt as a host country and an expatriate's home country. Furthermore, Ramsey (2005, p.378) states that not only subunits, corporations, industries, and nations seek legitimacy, but "groups and individuals strive for legitimacy" as well. This means that legitimacy is also important for

expatriates to be established and maintained because it is the main criterion used to identify whether expatriates' actions/behaviours are appropriate and acceptable by other social actors (e.g., local host colleagues) and legitimating actors (regulatory bodies). Hence, institutional theory lends a fruitful sociological perspective regarding how the institutional pillars may affect individuals (expatriates) on their international assignments (Ramsey, 2013), and this is relevant to this study. In particular, it helps to understand how expatriates' perceptions of ID are expected to influence their perceived job deprivation of autonomy, competence, and relatedness.

However, one important question that arises in this situation is: To what extent does an expatriate perceive a fit/misfit regarding this distance between two institutional environments? Thus, it is evident that the institutional theory is not sufficient alone to explain how ID may predict the three stressors of job deprivation. Therefore, it is important to implicitly complement the institutional theory with the (P-E) fit theory. The latter portrays P-E fit as the similarity, match, and congruence between the individual and environment (Edwards, 2008). Not surprisingly, management scholars demonstrated a considerable interest in the application of this theory in the workplace context by predicting various employees' attitudes and behaviours via different blocks of fit, encompassing person-person (P-P) fit, person-group (P-G) fit, person-job (P-J) fit, person-organisation (P-O) fit, and person-vocation (P-V) fit (Kristof-Brown et al., 2005; Morely, 2007). Jansen and Kristof-Brown (2006) proposed the algebraic summation of the previous five aspects of fit constituted the overall P-E fit. Edwards (1996) argued that the P-E approach gained superiority over the other competing alternatives due to addressing some of their shortcomings. For instance, situational approaches are plagued with criticism related to the ignorance of the role of individual differences in cognitively

evaluating situations. Thus, the P-E fit theory offsets this disadvantage by incorporating the cognitive evaluation conducted subjectively by the person to the environment.

According to the P-E Fit approach to stress, the basic assumption embodied by this theory is that “individuals’ attitudes, behaviours, and other individual-level outcomes result not from the person or environment separately, but rather from the relationship between the two” (Edwards, 1996, p292). The P-E fit theory provides an important distinction between two generic categories of fit: “Values-Supplies (V-S) Fit” and “Abilities-Demands (A-D) Fit” (Edwards and Cooper, 1990; Edwards, 1996). The former version contends with the well-congruence between an individual’s values (e.g., motives, preferences, goals, interests, and desire to exercise valued skills) and the environment supplies (e.g., job role, the characteristics of other organisation’s members, the quality of environmental characteristics, or challenging tasks) to satisfy these values. Thus, the subjective deviation between both aspects induces strain (Edwards, 1996; Wasserman et al., 2017; Lauring and Selmer, 2018). Conversely, the second type of fit means that there exists a commensurate between an individual’s ability (e.g., knowledge, skills, energy, and time) and objective environmental demands (e.g., number of working hours) (Edwards, 1996). In the latter type, individuals bring their personal resources to fulfil environmental demands, along with conducting a cognitive assessment of the environmental demands against their personal resources. As a consequence, stress may be elicited when personal resources fall short of the environmental requirements. In essence, the major thesis is that “S-V and A-D misfit will produce negative psychological, physiological, and behavioural outcomes, collectively labelled strain” (French et al., 1982; cited in Edwards and Cooper, 1990, p.294). This assumption has been empirically supplemented by Edwards’ (1996) study that found that both A-D misfit and V-S misfit were strain-laden. By contrast,

good correspondence engendered individual positive outcomes (Jansen and Kristof-Brown, 2006).

Following Ramsey's (2013) inspiration, "Person-Environment Fit Approach to Stress" (Edwards, 1996) is implicitly complemented with the institutional theory. The rationale beyond this complementation between these two theories is that expatriates may perceive different levels of fit between themselves and the host environment, leading to strain. Moreover, the institutional theory introduces three pillars for fit examination based on the cognitive evaluation. For example, when an expatriate's experience of misfit with the host country regarding labour regulations is high (i.e., the dissimilarity between his/her home country and the host one), then perceptions of job deprivation (strain) are more likely to be high. In other words, the distance may create a misfit between an expatriate and his/her host environment in general, and this shadow is expected to be reflected in the expatriate's job. Therefore, it is expected that P-E fit will serve as a good implicit mechanism adding a further explanation for the relationship between ID and job deprivation (i.e., the non-congruence/misfit between expected and actual situation regarding certain job features).

The next subsection discusses the theoretical arguments supporting the relationship between ID and job deprivation.

#### **4.2.1.1. ID and Expatriate's Job Deprivation**

International assignments often combine a substantial bulk of "stressful life events", such as a change in the living conditions and work responsibilities. These alterations are regarded as stressful when an expatriate assesses them as trespassing his/her personal resources and deteriorate his/her well-being (Hippler, 2014). In this sense, when expatriates relocate to a new



host country, they are more likely to experience stressful situations that are typically accompanied by uncertainty, which ultimately may hinder their ability to meet host environmental demands (Saks and Ashforth, 2000). Expatriates are contemplated as professional employees who possess unique skills and global expertise in a certain specialisation (Suutari and Brewster, 2000; Ren et al., 2015). Research suggests that out of 12 different motives, skills improvement, career advancement, personal development, and the prestige of overseas job itself are ranked as the most important impetus inducing expatriates to accept international assignments (Stahl et al., 2002). Thus, after expatriates' arrival in the host country, one of the most important and frequent concerns they probably face on their international assignments is that whether their job positions in the host country (e.g., Egypt) are advantageous relative to their previous positions in their home country. The answer to this question entails expatriates to delve into self-comparison that may spawn job deprivation, drawing on the "self-referent" approach of the RDT (Crosby, 1982; Folger et al., 1983). According to the latter theory, deprivation exists when there is a disparity between what an individual expects to achieve and what he/she actually receives (i.e., an individual receives less than deserved). In this regard, this research considers an expatriate's job deprivation as the degree of discrepancy between what the expatriate expects and he/she actually perceives regarding certain attributes of their jobs (Kraimer et al., 2012; Ren et al., 2015) due to self-comparison. In other words, expatriates expect their host job attributes to be better than their home jobs. If, conversely, they found their host jobs below their expectations, they might report the negative feelings of relative deprivation (Erdogan and Bauer, 2009).

According to Ren et al. (2015), perception of job deprivation is an indicator of unmet psychological needs or expectations. Drawing on the SDT (Ryan and Deci, 2000), three

psychological needs have been previously identified and defined in chapter 2, namely autonomy, competence, and relatedness. Thus, the current study argues that job deprivation-autonomy is likely to occur due to self-comparison when expatriates actually perceive less degree of discretion in deciding on the content, ways, scheduling, and performance of their host jobs than expected compared to their prior jobs before their international relocation. Job deprivation-competence exists when expatriates are allocated overseas positions that do not provide them with chances to fully utilise their competencies (abilities, skills, knowledge, and experience) (Kawai and Mohr, 2017)<sup>52</sup>. Finally, job deprivation-relatedness emerges when expatriates suffer a lack of the feelings of belongingness, intimacy, and respect by local colleagues in the host work environment relative to their prior one. Undoubtedly, thwarting these three needs in an expatriate's host job is expected to have negative consequences (job deprivation), but it is more important to identify the factors exacerbating job deprivation. More specifically, this study argues that ID between two countries is expected to be an appropriate predictor of expatriate's job deprivation as will be elaborated below.

Drawing on Kostova and Zaheer's (1999) conceptualisation of ID, this study defines it as an expatriate's perception of the degree of similarity or difference regarding the regulatory, normative, and cultural-cognitive institutions of his/her home country and Egypt as a host country. The regulatory component emphasises rules establishment, adherence inspection, and rewards/sanctions manipulation to affect behaviours (Scott, 2014). Up to date, expatriate

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<sup>52</sup> Expatriate's skill underutilisation is widely known as "underemployment" in expatriation literature (Bolino and Feldman, 2000a; Bolino and Feldman, 2000b; Lee, 2005; Kraimer et al., 2009). In the latter literature stream, underemployment is perceived in three cases: (1) when expatriates occupy jobs of less quality below their expected standards (Bolino and Feldman, 2000a); (2) when there is a perceived disparity between expatriates expectations of host position before expatriation and the actual position on overseas assignments (Kraimer et al., 2009); and (3) when they experience a significant skill-related void between an ideal/previous position and the overseas one (Kawai and Mohr, 2017).

employment practices are regulated and governed by the Egyptian labour law No. 136 in 2003. Thus, an emphasis is placed on the Egyptian labour laws and rules that are conceived as meaningful in terms of the regulatory dimension, as they have a direct influence on expatriates' work life. It is generally argued that the greater the similarity of rules between the home and the host country, the greater the expatriate's adjustment to his/her work environment and vice versa. Conversely, the more the disparity between overt/covert rules between the home and host country, the higher the likelihood for expatriates to commit mistakes and act illegitimately at their workplace (Ramsey, 2005). For further support, the previous argument is supplemented by a good example stating that if the formal and informal rules in the expatriates' home country (e.g., America) entail an employee to come to work at 8.00 am, has one hour break, and leave at 5.00 pm, then he/she may better adjust to the host work environment (e.g., Latin America), pending the application of the same rules there. If conversely, the rules in Latin America entail attendance at 9.00 am, having a two-hour break, and going back late, then expatriates may not be able to achieve other work responsibilities, such as attending late meetings at 6.00 pm (Ramsey, 2005).

In parallel, work rules in the majority of Arab countries, including Egypt, entail working 6 days (Saturday-Thursday) per week and taking one day off (Friday) (Yousry Saleh & Partners, 2016), accumulating 48 hours per week. If western expatriates are accustomed to working 5 days (Monday-Friday) and taking two days holiday (Saturday-Sunday), they may find a clash with their previous schedule when working in the Arab countries, like Egypt (Khedr, 2011). Another example is that all employees are normally entitled to 15-21 days (2-3 weeks) annual leave based on labour law (Riad, 2000), which is quite different from the annual leave in the UK where employees are eligible for 28 days (5.6 weeks) paid annual holidays (Gov.UK,

2018). This, in turn, may put work overload on British expatriates working in Egypt. Additionally, the Egyptian labour law imposes strict criteria for expatriates' employment and the kinds of jobs occupied by them in the foreign companies operating in Egypt. Perhaps the most significant provision is that expatriates are forced to be responsible for two local assistants, train them, and issue assessment reports periodically regarding their progress (Baker and McKenzie, 2015), a case that they may not face before in their home country. This implies that they may be overwhelmed by some increased responsibilities on their international assignments compared to their prior home jobs (Bhaskar-Shrinivas et al., 2005). Whatever the case is, an expatriate's behaviour may be criticised when he/she opt to abandon the host country's rules and keep his/her prior pattern or work schedule (Ramsey, 2005).

According to Grubb and Wells (1993), employment regulations can directly affect employees' work patterns. Scholars allude to these patterns as "Flexible Work Arrangements" (Masuda et al., 2012) or "Non-Standard Work Arrangements" that can include many forms, such as compressed workweeks, telecommunicating, flexible schedules (flextime), and part-time (Kalleberg, 2000). Such flexible arrangements are highly demanded and expected by today's employees to assist them in meeting their family requirements (Masuda et al., 2012) and controlling their work time (Berg et al., 2004). However, an employee's ability to exert control on working time (i.e., change working timing and duration) is found to be largely explained by the regulatory environment (e.g., government regulations) and these arrangements' application relatively varies across countries (Berg et al., 2004; Mitlacher, 2007). Berg et al. (2004) state that these arrangements do commonly propagate in Western societies compared to the non-Western ones because Western workers relatively enjoy the right of collective representation and participation at workplace, and Western legal environments create work schedules that

allow employees to achieve a balance between work and non-work domains. As noticed above, work scheduling (e.g., no. of daily/weekly hours, annual leave, and public holidays, etc.) is largely centralised and mandated by the Egyptian labour law no. 136/2003 that applies to all organisations and employees (Egyptians and non-Egyptians). Therefore, it is expected that expatriates may be deprived of their formerly entitled benefits of work time control that constitute an important aspect of job autonomy due to the regulatory distance.

It notoriously seems that differences between two regulatory environments may cause a discrepancy between work environment supplies/demands in the Egyptian context and the expectations/personal resources (Edwards, 1996) held/brought by expatriates from their home country, thereby creating what this study calls “expatriate-host institutional environment misfit” that results from some job-related stressors, such as unmet expectations or role overload (Saks and Ashforth, 2000). In essence, expatriates are more likely to perceive their host jobs overwhelming them with excessive demands mismatching their personal resources/expectations (Ramsey, 2013).

Theoretically, earlier expatriation scholars proposed that some job stressors, such as a lack of role discretion, role conflict, and role novelty, are expected to adversely affect expatriates’ adjustment to their work environment (Black, 1988; Black et al., 1991). These propositions have been empirically confirmed by Bhaskar-Shrinivas and colleagues’ (2005) meta-analysis, in which they concluded that role discretion had a positive impact on expatriates’ adjustment, as it allowed them to employ prior behavioural patterns to minimise uncertainty. However, from an institutional scene, expatriates are not free to do whatever they want, and their behaviours are regulatory-driven via coercive pressures (official laws and regulations) (DiMaggio and Powell, 1983).

Not only non-compliance or violation of foreign employment regulations may threaten expatriate's legitimacy but also this may expose expatriates to financial penalties that are conceived as costs emerging from non-awareness of local environments (Salomon and Zu, 2012). Compliance, therefore, is inevitably crucial and obligatory for expatriates seeking legitimacy claimed by legal sanctions to reduce uncertainty (Scott, 2014) and minimise the risk of "liability of foreignness" that is often attached to foreign outsiders working in host countries due to non-familiarity with the host institutional environment and large regulatory distance (Fang et al., 2013). This is typically referred to as "coercive isomorphism" that results from formal pressures (DiMaggio and Powell, 1983) that are conceived to refrain expatriates' role discretion.

Moreover, under the provisions of labour regulations in Egypt, expatriates are not allowed to work in Egypt without obtaining a temporary work permit that is typically issued for a maximum of one year and should be renewed on yearly basis. Nonetheless, work permit renewal may not be granted in some cases, such as economic, social, and political uncertainty/turbulence (OECD, 2014; Baker and McKenzie, 2015). This implies that expatriates may encounter some degree of uncertainty regarding their job security compared to their secured jobs in their home country. In such uncertain situations that are beyond their control, when expatriates' perceptions of job insecurity are evoked, they are less likely to be enthusiastic about their jobs, and are less likely to utilise their skills and invest their personal resources (time and energy) (De Cuyper & De Witte 2005; De Cuyper et al., 2008; Moshoeu and Geldenhuys, 2015). As a consequence, they are more likely to perceive their competence to be undermined, thereby spawning competence resentment.

In addition, regulatory distance is expected to affect expatriates' deprivation-relatedness. The regulatory distance can also be manifested in differences in governance modes across countries. For example, Li et al. (2013) argue that two dominant governance modes distinguish one country from another: "rule-based" and "relation-based" governance. In the former system, public rules are evident, fair, and universal, and impartially enforced by the state, along with the existence of high-quality and credible public information for efficient functioning. On the contrary, in the latter system, public rules are not transparent, unfair, and weakly enforced by the state, and therefore, people depend on their personal relationships and some corrupted means (e.g., bribes) to protect/secure their interests (Li, 2013; Li et al., 2004). The prevalent view is that Western countries attach with rules and Eastern countries pertain to personal relationship use (Li et al., 2004). Based on this classification<sup>53</sup>, Maurer and Li (2006) reasonably propose that it will be difficult for American (rule-based) expatriates to establish effective working relationships with local Chinese (relation-based) employees because of the incompatibility between the expectations of both parties. They argue that working relationships vary according to some dimensions, such as precision, scope, investment, and priorities, and that they are shaped by the industrial systems across countries. Concerning the investment aspect, Maurer and Li (2006) claim that, in relation-based societies, workers tend to invest time and personal resources to boost harmony in their relationships with their managers and other colleagues. These investments can take different forms, such as gifts, social events, and dinner parties, as attempts to establish mutual understandings. Borrowing the same logic, Egypt can be considered as a relation-based society (Parnell and Hatem, 1999). Thus, for example, if an

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<sup>53</sup> It is noteworthy to mention that despite this classification, this does not mean that relationship-based societies do not have formal rules, but the issue resides with social actors who violate these rules (Maurer and Li, 2006).

Egyptian peer or subordinate offered as a gift to an American expatriate who comes from a rule-based country, the latter may inappropriately react to such an action by the former, complying with the formal rules/policies of “no gifts” (Maurer and Li, 2006, p.37). This indicates that rule-based expatriates are less enthusiastic toward relation-based working relationships, believing that mutual understanding should be based on tangible agreements and formal rules rather than investment efforts. Therefore, the disparity in expectations may deteriorate the expatriate’s dyadic relationship with locals who may perceive that he/she breached the psychological elements of intimate working relationships, resulting in alienation and disaffection (Maurer and Li, 2006). This implies that an expatriate’s action may lead locals to generate a hostile view toward him/her, limit their interactions with him/her to only formal situations, and socially exclude him/her from informal social interactions within work.

In terms of Scott’s (2014) normative pillar of institutions, both values and norms have a significant spinoff in constraining social behaviour. This pillar focuses on the informal rules that introduce an evaluative, prescriptive, and obligatory aspect of social life. It also stresses the importance of an appropriate or socially accepted instrument for carrying out an individual’s roles, regardless of his/her personal preferences (Scott, 2014). In this regard, a greater emphasis is placed on the norms of managerial practices/skills and work-related values, as the differences between both two countries regarding these norms are expected to trigger expatriates’ job deprivation. Continuing with the assumption of expatriate-host environment misfit, when an expatriate’s perceived misfit regarding management practices is high due to significant normative differences between his/her home country and the host one, the greater his/her perceived deprivation. Recalling the main assumption of the institutional theory emphasising the differences between countries in terms of normative institutions, organisations



are squeezed by normative pressures to adapt to the host institutional environment by espousing analogue practices that are locally acceptable (DiMaggio and Powell, 1983; Scott, 2008; Wang et al., 2013).

Extending the previous picture in the expatriation context, expatriates are affected by their home normative practices. Likewise, the host country's employees are influenced by the host environment's normative practices that may affect their perceptions and how they view expatriates' behaviours (Wang et al., 2013). When expatriates transit to the new host environment, they have to understand the existing values and norms. It is argued that the greater the discrepancy between the home and host countries concerning the norms and values of how getting jobs done, the more difficulty expatriates may encounter in interacting with the host environment. Moreover, expatriates' legitimacy regarding the normative dimension is contingent on their ability to adapt to new norms and values of the new host environment (Ramsey, 2005). For example, as previously noted, management scholars highlight that the pseudo consultative decision-making style is embraced by the majority of Arab managers while managing employees in the Middle Eastern countries, as managers intend to create a nominal consultation by preparing employees to accept decisions that are already made rather than creating real consultation. By contrast, the consultative style is commonly prevalent in Western societies where decisions can be jointly made with subordinates (Ali, 1993; Al-Kazmi and Ali, 2002).

In general, Obediat et al. (2012) point out that contemporary management practices exclusively applied in Western organisations are quite novel to Arab organisations, making it difficult to be compatible with the Arabian cultural setting. This is expected to create challenges for expatriates. In this sense, when Western expatriates tend to utilise the consultative decision-

making practices while dealing with local employees in the Arab countries-based subsidiaries, like Egypt, their legitimacy may be compromised because this style does not fit with the Egyptian environment. Additionally, in such a situation, when expatriates seek local hosts' participation/consultation, this can lead local hosts to view expatriates as weak leaders with low integrity and poor skills (Parnell and Hatem, 2002). In their study addressing the interface between expatriates and the Egyptian culture, Brown and Ataalla (2002) highlighted that 81% of their sampled expatriates displayed their discomfort with the decision-making processes. The pseudo consultative decision-making style conjures up the authoritarian/paternalistic leadership style. It is largely consensual that the latter style is compatible with the Egyptian environment (Sahin and Wright, 2004) compared to the transformational style espoused in Western countries. The results of Brown and Ataalla's (2002) study showed that 75% of expatriates recognised the prevalence of the authoritarian style adopted by local employees, which is essential for achieving better performance results. Applying this in the expatriation context, expatriates should mask the authoritarian style in their supervisory skills to achieve superior results although this might mismatch and restrain their preferences. Atiyah (1996) found that expatriates experienced difficulty in adapting to the authoritarian style that was pervasive in Arab Countries.

Furthermore, Ali (1993) contrasts the work-related value of risk-taking that is deemed a catalyst for entrepreneurship, achievement, and economic progress. That is, in developed countries, managers are largely reliant on inputs obtained from consultants and experts, and hard data in decision making. Whilst, in developing countries that are characterised by a lack of reliable information, the Arab managers depend on their gut (Ali, 1993). Thus, in the overseas assignments' context, when Western expatriates are exposed to take critical decisions,

they may feel incompetence in functioning appropriately in such host Arabian environments because they were formerly accustomed to making justifiable decisions, whereas rational justifications for decisions in the Arab countries are not necessary (Ali and Azim, 1996). Hence, it is expected for expatriates from high normative distant countries not to be able to exploit their managerial skills and practices developed in their home country context, which may restrict their job discretion and undermine their competence.

Another evidence is the differences in the norm of “working relationship” that, as mentioned above, varies across countries, along the priority dimension. Generally speaking, Western expatriates adopt the transactional approach (i.e., the focus on accurate performance expectations), accompanied by holding the presumption that working relationships will evolve over time so that giving less priority to working relationships. On the other hand, relationship-based societies give primacy to relationship establishment because individuals view relationships as necessary for commitment and cooperation, and they assume that relationship building takes a long-time (Maurer and Li, 2006). The discrepancy between both expectations may adversely affect the quality of relationships between expatriates and local hosts. More explicitly, the previous differences regarding this norm may generate an inherent normative misfit that is more likely to pose obstacles for expatriates to establish working relationships with local colleagues/employees (Maurer and Li, 2006). This, in turn, may trigger relatedness deprivation.

Besides the normative aspect, the cognitive component is also pertinent to the cultural dimension of institutional distance (Wang et al., 2013; Scott, 2014). This pillar has been given major attention in the organisational studies. It stresses the shared conceptions/cognitions that shape social reality and attribute meaning to activities, objects, and social actors’ behaviours

(Scott, 2008). Scott (2014, p.67) suggests that “the hyphenated label cultural cognitive confirm that external cultural framework influences the individuals’ inner interpretation processes.” Thus, cultural theorists interpret social roles/events somewhat differently than normative theorists. The shared logic of actions and common beliefs are considered indicators of the cultural systems (Scott, 2014). Kostova (1999) proposes that the non-commensurate in the cognitive institutions makes the transfer of organisational practices from the home to the host country quite complicated because it is not easy for local employees to correctly understand, interpret, and judge them. Likewise, it is more likely for expatriates to misunderstand and misinterpret the cognitive schemata underlying the new host practices that are different from their home ones (Ramsey, 2005) because they come with their own expectations influenced by their home cognitive institutions, which are different from those held by the local host employees (Wang et al., 2013).

For instance, nations differ in communication styles (i.e., information processing), along a spectrum, ranging from low context at one extreme to high context at the opposite one (Hall, 1989). This continuum (high vs low context) contends with the extent to which information exchange in culture is precise, explicit, and free from ambiguous meaning (Korac-Kakabadse et al., 2001). The bases for classifying nations as high and low context extremely depend on personal observations and interpretation (Kim et al., 1998).

In high context cultures (e.g., Arab countries, Japan, and China), individuals are highly collectivistic and associated with each other via prolonged and cordial relationships (Hall, 1989). Moreover, individuals have a greater tendency to first establish trust, maintain personal relationships, and place less emphasis on negotiations (Martinko and Douglas, 1999). In such high context systems, information is highly programmed and implicitly conveyed via

nonverbal codes with deep meaning, assuming that the listeners are formerly contextualised and no further specific information should be provided (Hall, 1989; Korac-Kakabadse et al., 2001). While communicating, people place extensive reliance on situational cues (e.g., dress and body language) (Martinko and Douglas, 1999), and tend to adopt the roundabout, especially when unfavourable information should be delivered (Kim et al., 1998).

By contrast, in low context cultures (e.g., America, Canada, UK, Germany, and Swiss), individuals are characterised by a high degree of individualism, alienation, and fragmentation, accompanied by relatively less involvement with others (Hall, 1989). Such cultures emphasise doing business, valuing expertise and performance, and seeking efficient negotiations (Markinto and Douglas, 1999). In such low context systems, individuals convey information using direct, specific, and explicit verbal codes (Hall, 1989), assuming that their interlocutor is less contextualised and must be informed with all details (Korac-Kakabadse et al., 2001). While communicating, spoken or written words are more important than situational cues (Martinko and Douglas, 1999). They rarely invest time in establishing relationships and building trust while doing business, and even if they experience misfits regarding culture, they may simply cease relationships (Jorac-Kakabedse et al., 2001).

According to the previous distinction, it is abundantly clear that context is very important because it affects people's view of events. Therefore, if expatriates failed to take these contextual differences into their account, they would face difficulties and problems overseas (Hall, 1989). This may be true, especially in countries where the relationship between life and work is blurred (Aycan, 2005). One example is when an American expatriate communicates negative feedback about an Egyptian employee's performance. In low context cultures (America), direct messages and open confrontation are preferred, and criticism should be

formally and directly reported. Conversely, direct confrontation and getting others embarrassed are largely eschewed in high context cultures (Kim et al., 1998). Therefore, if an American expatriate provided this negative feedback directly to Egyptian employees, the latter may perceive this action as a personal confrontation that intimidates social harmony and intimacy between both parties. In the eyes of local employees, this means that this American expatriate does not appreciate the meaning of “saving face”, which is of utmost importance to be considered in the Egyptian context (Hatem, 2006). As proposed by Aycan (2005), the release of performance feedback should be contextually cued (subtle, implicit, and indirect) in a collective/high context culture to avoid conflicts and tensions resulting from personal confrontation. As a result of this expatriate’s misunderstanding of the meaning of his action and what the appropriate practice is to be used due to cultural-cognitive distance, he/she may experience a misfit, leading to difficulty in dealing with the Egyptian work environment. Moreover, this may limit employees’ social interactions with him/her, thereby provoking relatedness resentment. This is corroborated by Atiyah ‘s (1996) study that uncovered that poor social interactions between foreign expatriates and locals in Arab countries made expatriates experience feelings of loneliness and social exclusion.

Furthermore, Hall (1989, p.17) alleges that nations may vary according to how individuals view the time system. Two variant exemplars of time are attributed to both low and high-context cultures as “monochronic” and “polychronic”, respectively. In the monochronic system, “schedules, segmentation, and promptness” are emphasised. Whilst, in the polychronic system, several things occur simultaneously. As such, individuals tend to focus on involvement with others and task completion instead of compliance to pre-established schedules (Hall, 1989, p.17). Thus, Hall (1989) argues that American expatriates are more

likely to get psychologically distressed when dealing with the polychronic time in the Middle East. Evidence from the Egyptian (polychronic time) context points out that Egyptians' time punctuality is equivocal because they "move at their own time" and do not care about time and deadlines (Hatem, 2006, p.205). Egyptian employees usually use the common word "inshaallah" (if God will) in their speech. This word can explain why Western expatriates are disappointed in this regard because it may hold a dual meaning. While it may be logical for expatriates to initially recognise the explicit superficial meaning, reflecting that the employee has pure intention to do the task, the other meaning is implicit and perhaps has a pervasive negative connotation, indicating some uncertainty in adhering to deadlines. The latter meaning may be recognised by expatriates over time. Ali and Azim (1996) supported that foreign expatriates are more sensitive to many managerial and organisational problems, such as the Arab employees' carelessness about time. Therefore, it can be expected that differences in the cultural expectation regarding time systems may engender a misfit, causing difficulty for expatriates to utilise their time management skills (i.e., trigger competence deprivation).

Moreover, the present study claims that delays in meeting deadlines caused by local (Egyptian) employees/colleagues may impede expatriates' autonomy regarding task scheduling in case that there is some degree of interdependence between expatriates' job tasks and local colleagues' job tasks in contributing to the final task completion and deadlines. Wrzesniewski and Dutton (2001) argue that a high degree of interdependence with other work peers constrains freedom for job crafting.

One further piece of evidence may help to explain how cultural distance may contribute to expatriate's autonomy deprivation by recalling the issue of flexible work arrangements. Raghuram et al. (2001, p.749) articulate that although legal institutions may force organisations

to adopt flexible work arrangements, “its acceptance and effectiveness is likely to be dependent upon congruency with cultural factors.” They further highlighted that this point can be explained from a cognitive perspective. That is, employees’ cognitive evaluation and interpretation of a cultural practice/event may influence their attitudes and behaviours. For example, Masuda et al. (2012) diagnose the availability of flexible work arrangements across cultures, and their empirical findings supported the fact that managers report greater availability of FWAs in individualistic cultures compared to collectivistic ones. Therefore, although the absence of FWAs is consistent with the Egyptian collectivistic context (Raghuram et al., 2001; Masuda et al., 2012), Western expatriates are more likely to misunderstand and misinterpret the situation. As such, they may think that the host organisation is not flexible, not concerned about their personal life, and deprive them of their formerly entitled right of work schedule as is the case in their home country. This, in turn, may elevate the feelings of relative deprivation regarding job autonomy.

Ramsey (2013, p.168) suggested that the three pillars collaboratively might add more “explanatory power” of distance. In addition, she found that the overall concept of ID positively predicted job strain and travel strain. Similarly, it can be expected that the overall ID may predict the three facets of job deprivation. Taking the previous arguments and examples provided collaboratively, it can be argued that larger ID is more likely to inhibit expatriates’ ability to exert influence on their jobs (e.g., tasks scheduling and many other aspects), fully utilise their competencies, and establish effective relationships with local peers, and ultimately, this may positively exacerbate perceived job deprivation regarding relatedness, autonomy, and competence. Hence, the following hypotheses are formulated:



*H1a: There will be a positive relationship between ID and job deprivation of autonomy.*

*H1b: There will be a positive relationship between ID and job deprivation of competence.*

*H1c: There will be a positive relationship between ID and job deprivation of relatedness.*

#### **4.2.2. Adjustment and Expatriate's Job Deprivation**

The present study expects that work and interaction adjustment may mitigate the negatively perceived job deprivation. To understand why this relationship exists, the stressor-stress-strain framework is employed as a theoretical framework, consistent with previous expatriation scholars (Takeuchi et al., 2002a; Kraimer and Wayne, 2004; Bhaskar-Shrinivass et al., 2005). As previously mentioned, in this framework, stressors are viewed as uncertainties, emanating from the discrepancy between expatriates' personal resources and foreign environmental demands. If expatriates did not succeed in coping with stressors, stress would be manifested in the psychological dysfunction (maladjustment) in different domains in the host workplace. Subsequently, reactions to stress are manifested in the form of strains, encompassing behavioural (malfunctioning and early return), cognitions (withdrawal thoughts), and affective (job dissatisfaction) (Harrison et al., 2004; Bhaskar-Shrinivas et al., 2005). This implies that, by contrast, well-adjusted expatriates are less likely to experience strains. This is congruent with Shaffer and Harrison (1998, p.94), who state that "adjustment is conceptually the antithesis of distress". Empirical evidence found that adjustment inhibited job strain and promoted job satisfaction (Hechanova et al., 2003; Shaffer and Harrison, 1998; Bhaskar-Shrinivas et al., 2005; Takeuchi et al., 2009). Accordingly, it can be inferred that well-adjusted expatriates who are well-adjusted to their work responsibilities and interactions with local

colleagues may be less sensitive to perceived job deprivation regarding relatedness, competence, and autonomy. Hence, the following hypotheses are formulated:

*H2a: There will be a negative relationship between adjustment and job deprivation of autonomy.*

*H2b: There will be a negative relationship between adjustment and job deprivation of competence.*

*H2c: There will be a negative relationship between adjustment and job deprivation of relatedness.*

### **4.3. The outcomes of Expatriate's Job Deprivation**

#### **4.3.1. Job Deprivation and Thriving**

As previously explained, perceptions of relative deprivation exist when there is a contradiction between expectations and reality due to self-comparison (Crosby, 1982). After integration with the SDT (Ryan and Deci, 2000), expatriates may perceive job deprivation because of self-comparisons between their current job's attributes regarding competence, autonomy, and relatedness in the host country and their prior job in their home countries. In such cases, subjective experiences are more dominant than objective conditions in affecting expatriates' reactions (Crosby, 1976; Ren et al., 2015). Overseas job prestige is one of the motives for accepting international assignments (Stahl et al., 2002). Thus, when expatriates recognise that their host jobs' features are not actually more attractive compared to their home jobs, they tend to feel that their well-deserved expectations are underestimated by the host organisation. This, in turn, may predispose them to experience job deprivation (Feldman et al., 1997).

An employee's eagerness for growth and development (i.e., thriving) can be reinforced or thwarted by the work context (Spreitzer and Porath, 2014). It is worth mentioning that the theoretical framework of thriving developed by Spreitzer and her colleagues (2005) is centrally premised on the SDT. In this theoretical framework, the previous scholars point out that some contextual features can play an important role in promoting employee's thriving. More specifically, "decision making discretion" and "climate of trust and respect" are more likely to generate "three agentic work behaviours", including exploration, task focus, and heedful relating, which are conducive to thriving. When expatriates' host workplace provides them with greater job discretion (autonomy) compared to their home jobs and allows them to decide on what, how, and when to do their jobs, they are more likely to explore new approaches and ideas for performing jobs. This augments vitality and learning because exposure to new ideas restores energy and increases skills and knowledge acquisition (Spreitzer et al., 2005). By contrast, when expatriates are directed by the system, they cannot thrive because a lack of both discretion and self-control inhibits vitality, and a lack of autonomy minimises learning opportunities (Nix et al., 1999; Spreitzer et al., 2012).

Similarly, when expatriates feel that their foreign assignment jobs do not allow them to satisfy the competence need via the full utilisation of their skills previously practiced in their home country, they may suffer a lack of social worth, which in turn, hinders thriving. That is, incompetence may lead expatriates to feel that the host work environment does not appreciate, respect, and trust their unique skills and experience (Ren et al., 2015). For expatriates, a lack of trustful and respectful climate can also inhibit experimentation and exploration of new behaviours (Spreitzer et al., 2005) in the sense that expatriates may not feel psychologically safe (Edmondson, 1999). Previous empirical research emphasises that psychological safety is

quite essential for vitality (Kark and Carmeli, 2009) and learning capabilities (Edmondson, 1999; Edmondson, 2003). Also, a lack of social worth is said to adversely influence thriving (Ren et al., 2015).

For expatriates, going to international assignments entails leaving their strong and well-established ties/relations (e.g., workplace colleagues) at home and working abroad with local host colleagues who may not be able to fill in this relational gap (van Bakel et al., 2011). Expatriates, therefore, are expected to experience relatedness or belongingness/connectedness resentment when they are incapable of establishing and maintaining good respectful relationships with their local colleagues in the host work environment relative to the previous situation at home, and this, ultimately, may thwart thriving. From the SDT's perspective, interpersonal interactions between individuals (e.g., expatriates and local hosts) provoke vigour (Ryan and Deci, 2000). According to the high-quality connection theory, Heaphy and Dutton (2008) explain how individuals' psychological energy is affected by the positive daily social interactions in the organisational setting. As supported by Quinn (2007, p.74), "the higher the quality of the connection between people, the more the energy those people will feel". By contrast, when expatriates suffer a lack of relational connections with local colleagues, they are less likely to experience the vitality that normally emerges from well-established and constructive relationships. Concomitantly, they may lose learning opportunities that cannot be captured in isolation and non-dynamic interactions with local hosts (Carmeli and Spreitzer, 2009). In a similar vein, for culture-learning purposes, expatriation scholars propose that local hosts may act as "socialising agents" for expatriates. That is, interactions and socialisations with local colleagues are significant sources of social support and information from which expatriates can learn more about the host culture and organisational subtleties (Toh and Denisi,

2003). Also, this implies that expatriates may build relational resources via these positive interactions.

According to Spreitzer et al. (2005), the greater the level of relational resources that expatriates can develop with local colleagues, the greater the likelihood for them to behave agentially via heedful relating. In addition, the sense of relatedness may give a signal to expatriates that they are valued by local colleagues (Ren et al., 2015). This may lead expatriates to experience a climate of trust and respect, which reinforces heedful relating. Due to heedful relating, thriving can be experienced in two ways. On the one hand, when expatriates and local colleagues are heedfully related, expatriates can benefit from local colleagues' help and social support, and this support promotes physiological energy. On the other hand, when expatriates attend to what local colleagues do, their tendency toward learning from the approaches and strategies employed by local colleagues will increase.

By utilising the thriving-based relational model developed by Feeney and Collins (2015), supportive relationships can boost expatriates' thriving by helping them to get engaged in exploring opportunities for well-being enhancement via building and expanding resources and seeking positive meaning and purpose in their work life. In addition, Neissen et al. (2012) found that positive meaning experience at workplace positively predicted thriving.

Ultimately, the most recent integrative model of human growth by Spreitzer and Porath (2014) theoretically supported that thriving is more likely to be salient when the three nutrients of autonomy, competence, and relatedness are fully nurtured. Hence, it is expected for expatriates whose job-related needs of autonomy, competence, and relatedness are not satisfied in the host country compared to the home status to perceive negative meanings (Ren et al., 2015) because they tend to view their jobs as less meaningful (Spreitzer et al., 2005). This, in turn, will not

induce thriving. In alignment with the aforementioned postulations, the following hypotheses can be formulated:

*H3a: Perceptions of Job deprivation regarding autonomy and expatriate's thriving will be negatively related.*

*H3b: Perceptions of Job deprivation regarding competence and expatriate's thriving will be negatively related.*

*H3c: Perceptions of Job deprivation reading relatedness and expatriate's thriving will be negatively related.*

#### **4.4. The Moderating and Direct Role of Cross-Cultural Psychological Capital**

The moderating role of cross-cultural PsyCap in the relationship between job deprivation and thriving and its direct effect on thriving can be illuminated and explained from the lens of the Conservation of Resources (COR) Theory of Stress (Hobfoll, 1988). The COR theory is one of the resource-based theories of stress and motivation that has gained considerable research attention (Hobfoll, 2002; Hobfoll, 2011), with a broad application in the different organisational literature, such as job burnout (Halbesleben and Bowler, 2007; Halbesleben and Buckly, 2004), different stress contexts (Hobfoll, 2002; Hobfoll et al., 2006), and positive organisational behaviour (Luthans et al., 2007). The key tenet of this theory states that “people strive to obtain and protect their personal and social resources and that they experience stress when circumstances threaten or result in loss of these valuable states” (Hobfoll et al., 1990, p.466). Based on the previous tenet, this theory posits that stress takes place: “(1) when resources are threatened to lose; (2) lost; or (3) when individuals fail to gain resources after

substantial resource investment” (Hobfoll, 2002, p.312). From this theory’s perspective, resources are viewed as valuable means that an individual utilises to attain and protect valued resources that encompass: objects (e.g., work tools), conditions (e.g., job security, autonomy, and supportive work relationships), personal (e.g., personal traits, competence, etc), and energy (e.g., money, knowledge, and time) (Hobfoll et al., 1990; Hobfoll, 2001; Hobfoll, 2011).

The COR theory is composed of four key principles. The first one is “resource loss”; resource gain is less marked than resource loss. The second one is “resource investment”; individuals must invest resources to offset resource loss and gain resources. The third and fourth principles state that resource loss and gain cycles occur during stressful situations. One corollary that emerges from the previous principle is that “those with greater resources are less vulnerable to resource loss and more capable of orchestrating resource gain. Conversely, those with fewer resources are more vulnerable to resource loss and less capable of resource gain” (Hobfoll, 2011, p.117). In addition, Hobfoll et al. (1990) identified four corollaries of this theory. First, people are not passive participants to wait until the occurrence of stressful situations. Instead, they are induced to reinforce resources and fight against any potential resource loss in the future. Second, people use some resources to protect against other resources. Third, resource investment is costly in order to prevent loss and maximise gains. Fourth, the objective assessment and status of resource loss are important. Hence, individuals’ reactions to stress are contingent on individual differences reflected in the environmental circumstances and resource availability.

Hobfoll et al. (1990) further discussed two additional corollaries of the COR theory. First, social support is an important mechanism that individuals use to increase their limited resources confined to themselves. Social and personal resources are integral components of an

individual's identity. He hinted at individual support as the social relationships that provide an individual with attachment feelings to a person/group that is contemplated as sympathetic. Second, "resource replacement" is perhaps one of the most intriguing features of the COR theory, which proposes that "although a loss of resources is stressful, individuals may employ other resources to offset net loss" (Hobfoll, 1988, p.518). In other words, he postulates that individuals call all possible resources to navigate stressful events (i.e., resource loss), and well-being (e.g., thriving) may be restored if the lost resource can be substituted by another new valuable resource (Hobfoll, 2002).

Following the rationale of the principles of the COR discussed above, it can be theoretically expected for CC-PsyCap to play a moderating role in the relationship between job deprivation and thriving for two reasons. First, expatriates' reactions to stressful-provoking situations (e.g., job deprivation) on international assignments may vary based on their individual differences, manifested in the level of personal resources (i.e., CC-PsyCap) they possess (Hobfoll et al., 1990; Hobfoll, 2002). Second, applying the principle of "resource replacement" (Hobfoll, 1988), when expatriates are predisposed to a loss of resources (e.g., autonomy, competence, and relatedness) that is regarded as a stressful situation, they may utilise their other resources (CC-PsyCap) to offset this loss. This implies that expatriates with abundant levels of CC-PsyCap may be less susceptible to the three job stressors (i.e., deprivation of autonomy, competence, and relatedness) relative to expatriates with low levels of CC-PsyCap so that the former can restore thriving as a form of well-being.

In the domestic research, the empirical findings demonstrated that PsyCap made individuals more adept at coping with job stress (Avey et al., 2009; Avey et al., 2011a; Baron et al., 2016). More particularly, high self-efficacious individuals can function effectively under stress



(Bandura and Locke, 2003), are self-confident, and have sufficient cognitive ability to self-regulate their emotional state (Bandura, 2012). Moreover, high optimistic individuals are more able to transcend negative situations because they hold positive expectations of the improvement of circumstances and are less likely to experience depression and anxiety (Totterdell et al., 2006). In addition, it is argued that individuals high in resilience can adapt to “changing situational demands” because of overreliance on their positive emotions (Tugade et al., 2004, p.1168). Finally, hopeful individuals are depicted as flexible thinkers because they can develop alternative pathways effectively, especially under stressful circumstances (Snyder, 2002).

Analogously, some commentators emphasised the importance of the four psychological resources for employees in highly diversified cross-cultural contexts (Yunlu and Clapp-Smith, 2014; Reichard et al., 2014; Dollwet and Reichard, 2014). As such, cross-cultural high efficacious individuals have more self-confidence in interacting with people, even from different cultures (Dollwet and Reichard, 2014). Individuals who have high cross-cultural hopeful resources can create alternative strategies to navigate the blocked routes to maximise learning and performance in the cross-cultural context (Reichard et al., 2014). Moreover, high cross-cultural optimistic individuals can retain motivation and handle uncertainties on international assignments. Eventually, high cross-cultural resilient individuals can adapt to negative events, function well, and proactively learn even when encountering difficulties (Dollwet and Reichard, 2014).

To underpin the moderating role of PsyCap, some scholars captured evidence suggesting that PsyCap attenuated the harmful effect of negative (stressful) predictors on outcomes, such as perceived threats of terrorism on subordinates’ performance (Raja et al., 2020), perceived

organisational politics on job satisfaction and performance (Abbas et al., 2014), workplace incivility on thriving (Nawaz et al., 2020), and hindrance stressors on employees' citizenship behaviours (Khelifat et al., 2021). Luthans et al. (2007, p.568), ultimately, comment that "employees who are more hopeful, optimistic, efficacious, and resilient may be more likely to 'weather the storm' of the type of dynamic, global environmental contexts confronting most organizations today than their counterparts with lower psychological capital". Taken the previous argumentation together, it is plausible to expect the negative effect of job deprivation on thriving to be buffered for expatriates possessing high levels of CC-PsyCap. Therefore, the following hypotheses are formulated:

*H4a: CC-PsyCap moderates the relationship between job deprivation (autonomy) and expatriate thriving at workplace, such that the relationship will be weaker for expatriates with high CC-PsyCap.*

*H4b: CC-PsyCap moderates the relationship between job deprivation (competence) and expatriate thriving at workplace, such that the relationship will be weaker for expatriates with high CC-PsyCap.*

*H4c: Cross-cultural PsyCap moderates the relationship between job deprivation (relatedness) and expatriate thriving at workplace, such that the relationship will be weaker for expatriates with high CC-PsyCap.*

According to the COR theory, Hobfoll (2002) affirms that possessing high levels of resources (e.g., CC-PsyCap) is particularly beneficial in stressful circumstances because it leads to better psychological outcomes (e.g., thriving), active goal-directed behaviour, and superior functioning (Hobfoll, 2002). For instance, because high self-efficacious employees are

confident about successfully achieving their tasks, they devote significant focus on these tasks (Paterson et al., 2014). Thus, task focus fuels vigour and learning (Spreitzer et al., 2005). Also, hopeful employees have proactive behaviours in terms of developing new routes to get their tasks and goals accomplished (Nawaz et al., 2020) and exploring several ways to solve problems when working with people from different cultures (Dollwet and Reichard, 2014). Accordingly, exploration behaviours induce energy and enhance learning due to the exposure to new skills and knowledge (Spreitzer et al., 2005). Moreover, high optimists are more likely to interact successfully with co-workers from different cultures, tracing this back to their effective communication skills (Dollwet and Reichard, 2014). Therefore, they may heedfully relate with their colleagues at workplace so that they can get social support, which in turn, provokes vitality, and become attentive to learn from the strategies employed by their colleagues while doing work (Spreitzer et al., 2005). Additionally, high resilient employees are open to new experiences acquisition and feel energised (Tugade et al., 2004) because they consider adversities as a chance to flourish, develop, and learn (Luthans and Youssef, 2007). Also, it is alleged that resilient employees tend to be proactive learners in the cross-cultural context because of seeking mentors for advice when acting inappropriately (Dollwet and Reichard, 2014).

In addition, prior domestic research highlighted that high PsyCap individuals internalise positive emotions (Avey et al., 2008; Luthans et al., 2008c). Such positive emotions enable individuals to create “upward spirals” that are crucial to individuals’ development (Fredrickson, 2001), and to explore, grow, assimilate new information, and encounter new information (Wright et al., 2007). Ultimately, empirical research has demonstrated that PsyCap significantly reinforced employees’ psychological well-being (Avey et al., 2009; Baron et al.,

2016; Choi and Lee, 2014) and thriving in the domestic setting (Paterson et al., 2014; Nawaz et al., 2020), and metacognitive awareness, cultural intelligence, positive emotions, and adjustment in the cross-cultural context (Yunlu and Clapp-Smith, 2014; Dollwet and Reichard, 2014; Reichard et al., 2014). Consistent with all the previous arguments, it is expected that:

*H5: Expatriates' CC-PsyCap and thriving will be positively related.*

#### **4.5. Expatriate Success as an Outcome of Thriving**

The present study explains expatriates' success in terms of expatriates' willingness to share tacit-knowledge with local colleagues, intention to renew their current assignment, and performance. The present study argues that thriving expatriates tend to share tacit-knowledge with local colleagues in the host country, ask for renewing their current assignment, and achieve superior performance. The theoretical underpinnings of the hypothesised relationships are discussed in the following three sections:

### **4.5.1. Thriving as a Predictor of Expatriates' Willingness to Transfer Tacit-Knowledge**

As previously noted, expatriates act as boundary spanners (Furusawa and Brewster, 2019) and play a critical role in knowledge transfer from the parent company to foreign subsidiaries (Bonache and Brewster, 2001; Makela, 2007). In particular, tacit-knowledge transfer is quite sticky, as it entails spacious social interactions with local employees (Nooderhaven and Harzing, 2009). Indeed, this kind of knowledge places expatriates at an advantageous status (i.e., a source of superiority and power) (Chang et al., 2012). Therefore, fear of losing formal power and hierarchical respect may make expatriates less enthusiastic to share/transfer knowledge (Minbaeva and Michialova, 2004). Knowledge sharing is an individual decision (Minbaeva and Michialova, 2004) that is viewed as a function of expatriates' ability, willingness, and perceived opportunity (Chang et al., 2012b). The emphasis in the present research is placed on the willingness dimension because it has been found as a significant factor for expatriate effectiveness (Chen et al., 2010). In alignment with prior scholars' work on knowledge sharing willingness (e.g., Jiacheng et al., 2010; Chang et al., 2012b), the present study defines expatriate's willingness to transfer knowledge as the degree of expatriate's inclination or readiness to allocate time and exert efforts to share knowledge with local colleagues in the host country.

Therefore, what sparks or inhibits expatriates' willingness to share knowledge is of great importance to focus on because intentions to share knowledge are crucial for success for both individuals and organisations (Dixon, 2000; Bock et al., 2005; Jiacheng et al., 2010). For example, maladjustment to new cultures demotivates expatriates to transfer knowledge because of home-sickness and depression symptoms (Chang et al., 2012b). Additionally, it cannot be

negated that some scholarly efforts have been devoted to identifying the role of intrinsic (e.g., enjoying help and altruism) and extrinsic (e.g., rewards/incentives and reciprocity) motivations in knowledge transfer, but the results are still fragmented, particularly regarding the extrinsic dimension (see Minbaeva, 2003; Wasko and Faraj, 2005; Ko et al., 2005; Fey and Furu, 2008; Kang and Kim, 2010; Jiacheng et al., 2010; Hung et al., 2011; Hau et al., 2013). Nonetheless, in reality, incentive remuneration is argued to be an inadequate factor for enhancing expatriates' willingness to share knowledge (Chang et al., 2012b). Although some scholars conclude that some characteristics of the organisational climate, manifested in fairness, affiliation, and innovativeness (Brock et al., 2005), and trustful organisational climate (Jain et al., 2015) are significantly associated with intention to share knowledge, thriving (i.e., availability of learning opportunities and vitality) is still an under-examined catalyst for knowledge sharing intention.

For justifying how thriving may contribute to expatriates' willingness to transfer tacit-knowledge and identifying the underlying mechanisms supporting this relationship, this study capitalises on the theoretical framework of thriving (Spreitzer et al., 2005), complemented with the social capital theory. Indeed, one of the intriguing features of Spreitzer and colleagues' (2005) model of thriving is that thriving is a "self-adaptive" and dynamic process, with a continuous loop because of the feedback reversely associated with the three agentic behaviours and resources generated while doing work. More explicitly, thriving individuals tend to prolong the positive experience of thriving by getting engaged in continuously generating agentic behaviours (task focus, heedful relating, and explorations) to build additional resources (e.g., knowledge resources, positive meanings, positive affect resources, and relational resources) that are necessary for sustainable thriving. In particular, thriving individuals are likely to

demonstrate more heedful relating behaviours to create relational resources (Spreitzer et al., 2005). When individuals attend to each other, they may develop positive relational resources (Dutton and Heaphy, 2003) that are characterised by a high degree of interdependence and trust (Spreitzer et al., 2005). These relational resources constitute one of the main pillars of the social capital construct.

The social capital theory is premised on the tenet stating that relational networks constitute precious resources for conducting social affairs, thereby providing the members of this network a return on this collective capital (Nahapiet and Ghoshal, 1998). Thus, social actors can guarantee access to benefits through joining this social network (Portes, 1998). Social capital is a multidimensional construct comprising three different forms: structural (i.e., the configuration of ties), relational (i.e., the kind of relationship), and cognitive (i.e., the shared interpretations and meanings among associates) (Nahapiet and Ghoshal, 1998). As a result of possessing social capital, “the efficiency of actions may increase” (Nahapiet and Ghoshal, 1998, p.245). For instance, strong and high-quality social networks are anticipated to enhance the efficiency of knowledge sharing. Likewise, research suggests that relational capital (e.g., trust) is a key factor for willingness to share knowledge within network actors (Inkpen and Tsang, 2005).

Reflecting the previous lines of thought in the expatriation context, when expatriates experience the dual sensation of vigour and learning, they are expected to develop high-quality relational capital due to engagement in headful relating activities with local colleagues. Prior research found that relational capital formed by expatriates during international assignments through interactions with local colleagues highly facilitated knowledge transfer to local hosts (Chang et al., 2012; Chang and Smale, 2013; Bonache and Zarraga-Oberty, 2008). The findings

of empirical research have shown that thriving employees tended to function well and contribute significantly to their work environment. For instance, it is found that thriving is an optimal predictor of general health and career development, (Porath et al., 2012), innovative behaviour at work (Carmeli and Spreitzer, 2009), life satisfaction (Flinchbangh et al., 2015), career adaptability (Jiang, 2017), and work engagement (Ren et al., 2015).

Furthermore, Frazier and Tupper (2018) have recently proposed that thriving individuals possessed the cognitive resources that motivated them to act pro-socially and execute their job responsibilities. Prosocial motivation theorists claim that pro-socially motivated individuals have a strong tendency to positively impact others' work-life (Grant, 2007). Therefore, they are more likely to get engaged in behaviours that positively contribute to the benefits of others at workplace (Grant and Berg, 2011). Empirical research has supported the positive predictive power of social motivation on several work-related outcomes, such as task persistence and performance improvements (Grant, 2008), citizenship behaviours towards others (e.g., courtesy and helping) (Grant and Mayer, 2009), and higher supervisory performance evaluation (Grant et al., 2009). Hence, it is expected for thriving expatriates to be pro-socially motivated to have a positive influence on local host colleagues via the former's willingness to share tacit-knowledge with the latter.

Another beneficial theoretical lens that can further explain the relationship between thriving and expatriates' willingness to share knowledge is the social exchange theory (SET). The SET is one of the influential paradigms employed in organisational behaviour research (Cropanzano and Mitchell, 2005). The SET is centrally premised on the notion that human behaviour is an exchange of activity (Homans, 1958; Blau, 1986). Additionally, the SET posits that relationships develop over time and can be converted to mutual commitment, loyalty, and trust.



To achieve this, social actors must embrace the “norm of reciprocity” that is pertinent to the exchange relationship (Gouldner, 1960; Emerson, 1976). According to Blau (1986, p.93), social exchange “involves the principle that one person does another a favour, and while there is a general expectation of some future return, its exact time is definitely not stipulated in advance.” Accordingly, an interdependent exchange is one of the traditions of reciprocity, which emphasises that exchange is a dyadic process instilled in the mutual take and give (Hau et al., 2013). As such, when a person receives a benefit, he/she should respond in the same pattern (Crospanzano and Mitchell, 2005). In organisational studies, Wayne et al. (1997) outline that social exchange may take two forms: exchange between employee and organisation or exchange between two individuals (e.g., leader and subordinate). Based on the ideology of reciprocity, Abid et al. (2016) argue that when employees are provided with learning opportunities at their workplace, they may experience the feeling of self-obligation and commitment to care about their organisation’s interests as an attempt to reciprocate that behaviour.

Not only expatriates are dispatched overseas for knowledge sharing but to learn about the foreign subsidiaries, host environments, and different cultures, and to establish relational networks that help the parent companies to achieve their objectives (Sonesh and DeNisi, 2016). In essence, it can be argued that thriving expatriates are likely to capture learning opportunities driven by heedful relating and interactions with local host colleagues who are conceived to act as socialising agents (Toh and DeNisi, 2007), cultural interpreters (Vance et al., 2009), and repository of informational support regarding procedures, local customs, traditions, and rules of the work setting (Mahajan and De Silva, 2012; Sonesh and DeNisi, 2016), from which expatriates’ skills and knowledge application are leveraged. When blended with vitality,

expatriates may be stimulated to reciprocate these benefits by sharing their tacit-knowledge with local host colleagues. Research suggests that reciprocity promotes knowledge sharing intentions (Cabrera and Cabrera, 2005; Lin et al., 2012; Hau et al., 2013). Ultimately, thriving expatriates can create knowledge resources due to heedful relating with local colleagues. Therefore, they are expected to reciprocate these resources by getting engaged in knowledge-sharing intentions/behaviours in accordance with the exchange perspective. Taken together, it can be suggested that:

*H6: Thriving will be positively related to expatriates' willingness to share tacit knowledge with local host colleagues.*

#### **4.5.2. Thriving as a Predictor of Expatriate's Intention to Renew Current Assignment**

Conventionally, the expatriation literature has commonly demonstrated that expatriate's success on international assignments can be explained by several criteria, such as premature repatriation, cross-cultural adjustment, organisational commitment, completion of current assignment (Shaffer et al., 1999; Kraimer and Wayne, 2004; Ren et al., 2015). In particular, completion of current assignment is one of the most fundamental behavioural yardsticks employed to assess expatriates' success; adopting behavioural intentions as a proxy for current assignment completion (Kraimer and Wayne, 2004). Nevertheless, the present study departs from this limited positive view to a broader positive one by arguing that expatriates' intentions to renew their current assignment for a similar period can be explained by their positive experience of thriving on international assignments.

Expatriates consider international assignments as a tool to develop and broaden their global experience and mindset, enhance their intercultural skills, and develop their careers (Stahl et al., 2002). Thriving is a positive desirable subjective experience that expatriates can use as a thermometer to gauge whether they are developing in a positive direction, manifested in short-term functioning improvement and long-term adaptability at workplace. For instance, when expatriates thrive, they are predisposed to acquire new skills and knowledge that are necessary for their career development (Porath et al., 2012), and this, in turn, matches with their motives to accept international assignments. In addition, this newly acquired knowledge and skills contribute to the know-how form of career capital (Jokinen et al., 2008). When consolidated with vitality, expatriates may be more prone to explore any opportunities (Porath et al., 2012) to further develop their skills and careers, and enrich their career capital. This is consistent with Spreitzer et al.'s (2005) suggestion that thriving individuals are anticipated to engage in continuous exploration behaviours to sustain their thriving experience.

Moreover, expatriates who experience vitality attempt to perpetuate reinforcing circumstances (e.g., fruitful international assignments), tend to view events positively, and yearn the reoccurrence of these positive circumstances and successful experiences (Collins, 1993; Kark and Carmeli, 2009). Also, it is argued that thriving expatriates are more passionate about their jobs (Ren et al., 2015). Therefore, the continuous experience of personal growth and vitality can induce expatriates to ask for renewing their current assignment for a similar period. Thus, it can be speculated that:

*H7: Thriving will be positively related to expatriates' intention to renew their current assignment.*

### **4.5.3. Thriving as a Predictor of Expatriates' Performance**

Consistent with expatriation scholars, performance is treated as a multifaceted construct (Caligiuri and Day, 2000; Caligiuri et al., 2016), comprising task performance that refers to achieving the technical aspects and objectives of the job (Kraimer and Wayne, 2004), and contextual performance that denotes expatriates' capacity to develop and maintain good relationships with local colleagues at the host workplace (Harrison and Shaffer, 2005; Lee and Sukoco, 2010). Drawing on Spreitzer et al.'s (2005) model of thriving, individuals who thrive are inclined to display agentic behaviours, such as task focus and heedful-relating. Such agentic behaviours are crucial for generating meaningful resources while doing their jobs, such as knowledge and high-quality relationship building. These resources, when blended with vitality, are argued to be sustainable and ultimately conducive to superior performance (Porath et al., 2012; Bruch and Ghoshal, 2003). Putting this in the expatriation context, thriving expatriates who are more task-focused are more likely to engage in developing and refining the routines of their job requirements and successfully executing them as well as establishing dyadic connections with local colleagues, mentors, suppliers, and customers. Moreover, thriving expatriates tend to heedfully associate with others (i.e., local hosts). In doing so, expatriates are not only expected to glean knowledge that may be helpful for understating the way of getting their jobs' objectives accomplished but also they may become attentive to how they and their colleagues contribute to the effective functioning of the overall work system. Consequently, this generates high-quality and supportive bonds between them due to the sense of interdependence (i.e., expatriates and local colleagues can rely on each other when needed) (Spreitzer et al., 2005; Spreitzer and Porath, 2014). In the domestic work setting, research has frequently provided ample evidence supporting that thriving improves employee' performance

either self-rated or supervisory rated (Porath et al., 2012; Paterson et al., 2014; Niessen et al, 2017). Taking all the previous together, the following hypothesis is expected:

*H8: Thriving will be positively related to expatriates' performance.*

The previous argumentations and hypothesised relationships help to develop the following envisaged conceptual framework:

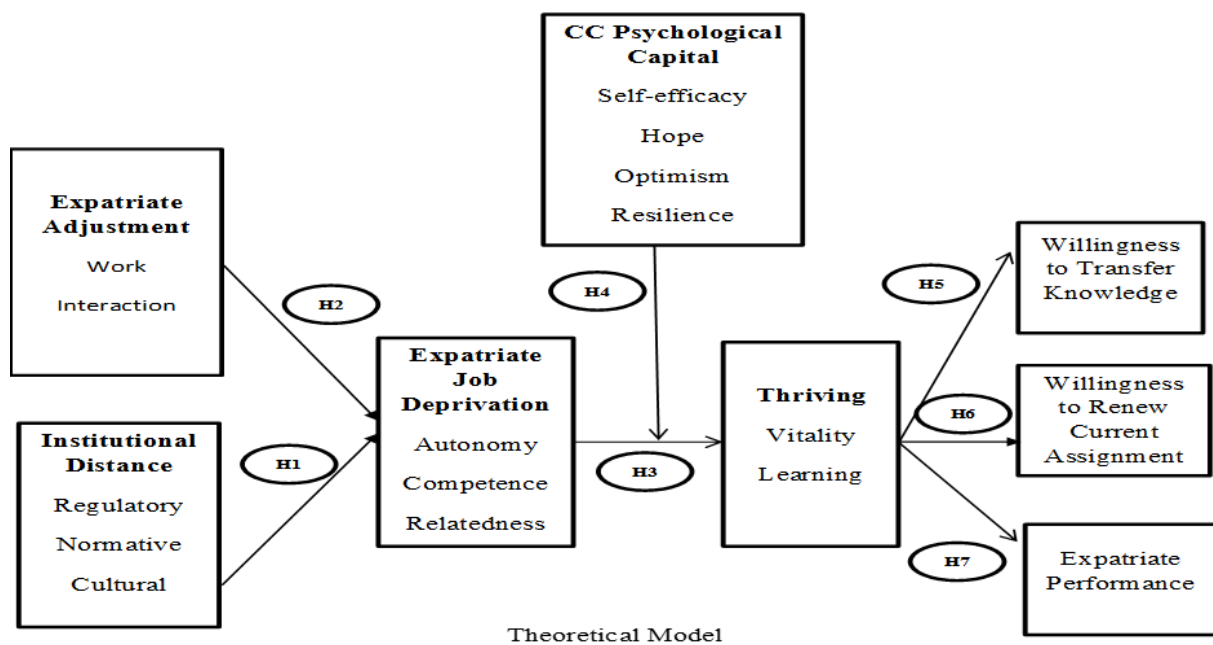


Figure 4.1: Theoretical Framework

## **Chapter Five: Research Design and Methodology**

### **5.1. Introduction**

The aim of this chapter is to highlight the detailed research methodology adopted to test the relationships hypothesized in the previous chapter 4 and answer the present study's research questions. Hence, this chapter is structured and organized into six sections as follows: (1) research philosophy and paradigm; (2) research design; (3) data collection instrument; (4) population and sampling techniques; (5) statistical techniques of data analysis; and (6) research ethical considerations.

### **5.2. Research Philosophy and Paradigm**

Each research venture is premised on some philosophical assumptions that underlie the researchers' decisions regarding the embracement of the appropriate and valid research methodology for the purpose of knowledge development in a specific field. Accordingly, the research methodology is selected in accordance with the paradigm that directs the research inquiry (Antwi and Hamza, 2015). A research paradigm represents a bundle of agreements and beliefs jointly shared by a group of researchers regarding how to understand and address research problems (Kuhn, 1977; cited in Antwi and Hamza, 2015, p.218). Scholars proposed that each research paradigm is informed by 5 philosophical underpinnings/assumptions, encompassing "ontology, epistemology, axiology" (Saunders, Lewis, and Thornhill, 2016, p.127), "rhetoric" (Collis and Hussey, 2014), and "methodology" (Antwi and Hamza, 2015).

Richards (2003, p.33) defined ontology as "the nature of our beliefs about reality". It attempts to ontologically answer the question: "what is the nature of social reality?" (Blaikie, 2012, p.13). Meanwhile, epistemology is typically known as "the branch of philosophy that studies

the nature of knowledge and the process by which knowledge is acquired and validated” (Gall, Gall, and Borg, 2003, p.13). It contends with the questions: “what is the relationship between the knower and what is known? How do we know what we know?” (Krauss, 2005, p.759). Thus, it focuses on the process of gathering knowledge and deals with the development of new better theories compared to the extant competing ones (Grix, 2002). Axiology is concerned with the role of ethics and values while conducting the research inquiry. It considers the question regarding how researchers deal with the values of research participants and their own ones (Saunders et al., 2016). In addition, the rhetorical assumption contends with the language of inquiry (Collis and Hussey, 2014). Finally, methodology refers to the practices, procedures, and tenets that govern/guide the researcher on how the research process should be conducted (Antwi and Hamza, 2015). It delineates the way (i.e., how) of acquiring knowledge (Grix, 2002)

It is outlined that both objectivity and subjectivity are situated at the two ends of one spectrum, and under both extremes, the 3 philosophical assumptions of ontology, epistemology, and axiology are located (Saunders et al., 2016). Each philosophical level is explained from these two contradicted extremes as follows:

First, from an ontological position, objectivism assumes that social reality is external to social actors. Therefore, objectivists seek realism and hold the belief that all social actors experience one homogenous reality. At the same ontological stance, by contrast, subjectivism advocates nominalism and asserts that social reality is created by social actors’ perceptions and interactions. As social reality can be perceived differently from one person to another, subjectivists support the multiplicity of social realities instead of one single reality experienced by all social actors (Saunders et al., 2016).

Second, from an epistemological point of view, the way through which objectivists attempt to reach the truth is via social facts that can be observed and measured in order to generate universal generalizable laws about social reality. Conversely, subjectivists are more prone to collate different narratives and opinions to create varied social realities via interactions with social actors (Saunders et al., 2016).

Third, axiologically speaking, both objectivists and subjectivists embrace the “value-free” and “value-bound” stances, respectively. In the former stance, the social phenomenon is examined while the researcher detaches his/her own beliefs and values. Whilst, subjectivists demonstrate reflexivity and incorporate their own values within the research process (Saunders et al., 2016).

Based on this distinction between the two extremes at the epistemological level, scholars differentiated between the two main dominant research paradigms in social sciences: “interpretivism and positivism” (Guo and Sheffield, 2008). The positivism paradigm is conceptualized as the epistemological stance that bolsters applying the natural sciences’ methods in examining social reality (Bryman and Bell, 2015). It corresponds with objectivists who hold “hard” assumptions and beliefs about the external world, which can be scientifically measured and reflected with unique expertise and knowledge (Guo and Sheffield, 2008, p.675). Thus, positivism is considered as a systematic approach, integrating both the logical deduction and empirical observation of social actors’ behaviours to establish causal laws employed in anticipating humans’ behaviours and activities (Neuman, 2003).

By contrast, the interpretivism paradigm is the anti-positivism epistemology that espouses the notion of differences existing between social actors and natural sciences objects, thereby entailing an adequate deep understanding of the subjective meanings of social actors’ actions (Bryman and Bell, 2015). Interpretivism scholars are more concerned with understanding a



specific phenomenon than developing generalizable laws (Antwi and Hamza, 2015). It corresponds with social constructionists who hold “soft” assumptions and beliefs used in grasping and interpreting the meaning of social reality that is conceived to be socially constructed (Guo and Sheffield, 2008). Drawing on prior scholars’ work, a summary of the differences between the two paradigms are provided in the following table 5.1:

Table 5.1: Research Paradigms

<b>Research Paradigms</b>	<b>Positivism</b>	<b>Interpretivism</b>
Theoretical perspective	Utility.	Human agency.
Concerns	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To discover universal laws that can be used to predict human activity.</li> <li>• Be concerned with hypotheses testing.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To uncover the socially constructed meaning of reality as understood by an individual or group.</li> <li>• Be concerned with generating theories.</li> </ul>
Ontological and epistemological assumptions	The objective world, in which science can measure and “mirror” with expert, privileged knowledge.	The inter-subjective world, in which science can represent with concepts and indicators; social construction of reality.
Axiological assumption (role of values)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Stands aloof and apart from stakeholders and subject matter so that decisions can be made objectively.</li> <li>• Results are value-free and unbiased.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Becomes more fully involved with stakeholders and subject matter to achieve a good understanding of the stakeholders' world.</li> <li>• Results are value-laden and biased.</li> </ul>

Rhetorical assumption	Passive voice and accepted quantitative terms are used	Personal voice and accepted qualitative words are used
Methodological assumptions (Approach, methods, and sample size)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Deductive approach and quantitative methods are employed.</li> <li>• Objective, precise, and quantitative data are collected from large samples (e.g., using questionnaires) and statistically analysed.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Inductive approach and qualitative methods are adopted.</li> <li>• Rich, nuanced, subjective, and qualitative data are collected from small samples (e.g., using in-depth interviews).</li> </ul>
Results	Tend to be generalisable from the sample to the population and highly reliable but with low validity.	Tend to be only generalisable to another similar setting with high validity but low reliability.

Source: (Guo and Sheffield, 2008, p.675; Collis and Hussey, 2014, p.46-50)

It is postulated that positivism is premised on three central principles that management scholars should inherently comply with. First, positivist researchers should attempt to establish causal laws that explicate how social actors regularly behave. This requires using a cross-sectional research design (i.e., will be discussed in the next section), along with conducting empirical observations of the external world via sensory experience that is believed by logical positivists to be the sole foundation for constituting valid knowledge. Second, social phenomena should be examined using the same strict scientific models of natural sciences. Therefore, management researchers should be preoccupied with the considerations of reliability, operationalisation (measurement of concepts using observable indicators), internal validity (causality), and external validity (generalisability of results). These previous key considerations will be discussed later in more detail. Third, management researchers should stand back when

observing subject matter to maintain objectivity and impartiality<sup>54</sup> from what is being observed and measured (Johnson and Duberley, 2000). Fourth, they should develop hypotheses based on existing theories' tenets and test them by quantifying observations and employing statistical techniques (Kim, 2003). In alignment with all these previously mentioned tenets, it is conceived that "positivism" is the appropriate paradigm underpinning the present study<sup>55</sup>, which is closely associated with the adoption of quantitative methodology (Bryman, 1984; Johnson and Duberley, 2000).

Generally speaking, with respect to the choice of methodology, scholars differentiated between both quantitative and qualitative methodologies. The former is considered as a research method that relies on testing theories and using numerical data extracted from statistical analysis in explaining social phenomenon (Yilmaz, 2013). Conversely, qualitative research is the research mode that endorses narratives and ascribes meanings to social phenomenon instead of numerical data (quantification) in gathering and analysing data (Yilmaz, 2013; Bryman and Bell, 2015). However, the present study is more inclined to the adoption of the quantitative methodology for several reasons. First, the quantitative methodology is the hegemonic method employed in the majority of empirical managerial and behavioural research (Baruch and Holtom, 2008). Second, based on the present study's reliance on extant theories in developing

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<sup>54</sup> In the positivism realm, management scholars' values do not impact the responses of the target participants in the questionnaire, and they preclude their subjective interpretation in the assessment of the external reality (Saunders et al., 2016).

<sup>55</sup> The employment of the positivistic approach has several benefits. It endeavours to: (1) detect causality (i.e., "how a change in one variable will produce change in another one") (Kim, 2003, p.14); (2) allow analysing numerous variables in one mono study; (3) generate externally valid and applicable knowledge; (4) facilitate refining the existing theories by questioning them for further refinement instead of delving into the antecedents of prior research. Therefore, this approach reinforces cultivating rigorous knowledge via triggering queries, thereby enhancing the researcher's awareness of the validity of the hypothesised relationships; and (5) minimise investigator's bias that is more likely to corrupt the process of inquiry (Kim, 2003, p.14).

a set of hypotheses (see chapter 4), it allows for the examination of the relationship between multiple variables that can be numerically and statistically analysed using different statistical tools (Saunders et al., 2016). Third, it manages time resources more efficiently because it helps to collate large amounts of data within a particular time horizon (McCusker and Gunaydin, 2015). Thus, it can be inferred that quantitative research is less time-consuming relative to qualitative research (Johnson and Onwuegbuzie, 2004). Fourth it can be replicated due to its clear objectives and guidelines (Daniel, 2016). Fifth, in quantitative research, the issue of investigators' bias would be extremely eliminated during data collection if researchers had no direct contact with the participants (e.g., when data is collected via paper and pencil questionnaire) (Daniel, 2016). Finally, unlike qualitative methods, quantitative ones seek to gather data from larger sample sizes (Sale, Lohfeld, and Brazul, 2002) using probability sampling procedures to increase the probability of results' generalisation (Saunders et al., 2016).

To sum up, it is quite essential to understand the philosophical assumptions underlying the adopted research paradigm because they have a major influence on deciding on the appropriate research design (Wilson, 2014), which is discussed in the following section.

### **5.3. Research Design**

Scholars suggest that the choice of research design has a great impact on the kind and quality of empirical research (Ghauri and Gronhaug, 2010). According to Wilson (2014, p.115), a research design is referred to as “a detailed framework or plan that helps to guide through the research process, allowing a greater likelihood of achieving research objectives.” It is a statement that is predominantly written prior to data collection, which provides sufficient details and justifies what, how, and from where data should be collected (Easterby-Smith,

Thorpe, and Jackson, 2015). If designed effectively, research is more likely to generate the required data within the different constraints (e.g., time, skills, and budget) encountered by the researcher (Ghuri and Gronhaug, 2010). Wilson (2014) classified research design into several categories, encompassing: case study, action research, experiment, cross-sectional, longitudinal, comparative, and archival research designs.

However, the ultimate decision on the choice of research design is largely determined and directly impacted by some issues that should be considered by researchers. These issues are illustrated in the following table 5.2:

Table 5.2: Research Design Considerations

Research Design	Purpose of study	Exploration	It embraces the inductive approach. Also, in such kind of research, very little is known about the research problem, given the lack of knowledge and published research about a particular topic. Hence, under this category, the investigator seeks to develop a better understanding of a particular theme. Exploratory research is typically qualitative and largely uses observations, focus groups, and in-depth interviews. It is very rarely for exploratory research to generate conclusive answers to research problems but promotes developing future research directions.
		Description	It is conducted to accurately describe the features of the variables of interest in a given situation. The research problem is well structured in this kind of research. In addition, it can be conducted qualitatively and quantitatively. In the latter mode, surveys are used to collect data for further descriptive statistical analysis (e.g., mean and standard deviation).
		Hypotheses testing (causal or explanatory)	It is concerned with the cause-and-effect relationships. Hypotheses testing research is conducted for detecting the amount of variance explained in the endogenous (dependent) variables by the independent ones, and predicting organisational outcomes. Like descriptive research, in the causal category, the research problems are well structured.
	Type of investigation	Causal relationships	The research attempts to determine the defined cause of one or more problems. The cause and effect relationships can be established via specific kinds of regression or correlational analysis (e.g., path analysis). If the researcher attempts to deliberately manipulate specific variables (change setting or events) to examine the impact of this manipulation on the dependant variables, the study tends to be causal and vice versa.
		Correlations	The researcher aims to delineate the significant variables related to the problem.
	The extent of researcher interference	Minimal	Studying events as they normally occur.
		Manipulation	Control and simulation.

	Study Setting	Contrived	A place where the majority of strict causal studies are conducted, which is also known as field experiments.
		Non-Contrived	A normal work environment (i.e., where correlational organisational studies are undertaken), which is also known as field studies.
	Unit of Analysis	Individuals	Data collected from each employee and each response is deemed as an individual data source.
		Dyads	Superior-subordinate relationship.
		Groups	Company's individuals in different groups.
		Organisations	Comparing the various divisions within an organization.
		Nations	Cultural differences among different countries.
	Time	One-Shot (Cross-sectional)	"A cross-sectional research design entails the collection of data on more than one case (usually quite a lot more than one) and at a single point in time to collect a body of quantitative or quantifiable data in connection with two or more variable (usually many more than two), which are then examined to detect the pattern of association" (Bryman and Bell, 2015, p.62).
		Longitudinal	Phenomena or people are studied over a long period, aiming at capturing alterations occurring over time.

Source: Sekaran and Bougie (2012, p.102), Ghauri and Gronhaug (2010), Wilson (2014), and Bryman and Bell (2015).

Given the illustrations provided in the above table and the nature of the present study's research questions and hypothesised relationships, the present study can be deemed as a descriptive correlational field study that is conducted on business expatriates in a non-contrived setting (subsidiaries of foreign organisations/companies operating in Egypt) with very minimal interference during the period of survey distribution and data collection done within one shot period time. Based on this, the present study adopted the cross-sectional design. The rationale beyond this choice is driven by the advantages of this design. First, a cross-sectional design allows for collecting data and investigating more cases (e.g., individuals, such as expatriates), and scrutinising the pattern of association between variables. The second significant advantage of this kind of design is that data are gathered "at a single point of time." This implies that the design is less costly and does not consume more time and effort relative to the longitudinal design. Consequently, the entire research is more likely to be terminated over a short time (Wilson, 2014, p.125; Sekaran and Bougie, 2012). Finally, in the cross-sectional designs, the likelihood of participants' cooperation in completing one questionnaire is greater than longitudinal designs (i.e., completing several questionnaires at different times). This also implicitly means that the potential of losing participants in the former is quite less than in the latter (Liu, 2008).

Accordingly, the cross-sectional design corresponds to the unique expatriate population that is quite complicated to get accessed more than one time in Egypt for security reasons. This was the first major contextual reason prohibiting the researcher from collecting data at two different times (e.g., two stages). In addition, the researcher was quite concerned about losing responses even if access was allowable for a second time for collecting data from expatriates.



## 5.4. Data Collection method

Data collection is an important and inevitable task for either quantitative or qualitative management research (Hair et al., 2011). The nature of data is classified as being either primary or secondary. The former refers to the data collection for the 1<sup>st</sup> time from its original source using different tools, such as questionnaires, surveys, experiments, interviews, and focus groups. The latter is related to the data generated/gathered from existing sources, for example, databases, publications, or internet records (Sekaran and Bougie, 2012; Collis and Hussey, 2014). In management and business disciplines, the majority of scholars gather primary data to answer research questions (Ghauri and Gronhaug, 2010). Therefore, the present study employed a questionnaire survey tool to gather primary data from the target population. The survey method is commonly associated with the positivism paradigm and deductive research approach (Collis and Hussey, 2014; Saunders et al., 2016).

Generally speaking, when choosing a research method, researchers are advised to devote considerable attention to 3 key aspects (Yin, 2009) that are summarized in the following table 5.3:

Table 5.3: Relevant Situations for Different Research Methods

<b>Method</b>	<b>Form of research question</b>	<b>Required control of behavioural events</b>	<b>Focuses on contemporary events</b>
Experiment	How, Why	Yes	Yes
Survey	Who, What, Where, How many, How much	No	Yes

Archival analysis	Who, What, Where, How many, How much	No	Yes/No
History	How, Why	No	No
Case Study	How, Why	No	Yes

Source: Yin (2009, p.8)

As evident in the table above, survey methods tend to answer “what, how, where, how many, and how much” research questions. Accordingly, it is consistent with the nature of the present study’s research question. For instance, what is the relationship between expatriates’ perceptions of job deprivation and thriving at workplace? Also, a survey is a relevant method since the researcher’s control over behavioural events is absent or quite minimal. Finally, the survey method is given primacy in the present study because it focuses on contemporary rather than historical events. In other words, the present study addresses the concurrent perceptions of expatriates regarding ID and job deprivation, experience of thriving, dynamic personal resources, behavioural intentions, and performance on their current international assignment in Egypt.

Baruch and Boltom (2008) outline that questionnaires are the most common and extensively employed for gathering data in organisational research, they help to formulate insights about both the participants’ attitudes and perceptions, and the organizations’ practices and policies. In addition to the previous advantage, they allow for gathering quantitative data that can be quantitatively addressed using inferential and descriptive statistics (Saunders et al., 2016). Furthermore, they help to test the correlation between variables using control variables to robust alternative explanations (Neuman, 2012). In addition, they reinforce the investigation’s control over the process of the inquiry, such that the potential of results’ generalisability is

more likely to occur when a statistically random sample is drawn. Thus, the costs associated with data collection tend to be low because the data are collected from a sample rather than the entire population (Saunders et al., 2016).

### 5.4.1. The Questionnaire Design Procedures

A questionnaire is typically referred to as a tool for gathering primary data, which incorporates a set of carefully developed questions selected after considerable testing to elicit reliable responses from a sample of respondents (Collis and Hussey, 2014). The researcher followed the 5-step procedures suggested by Hair et al. (2011) in constructing the present study's questionnaire. These five steps are shown in the following figure 5.1

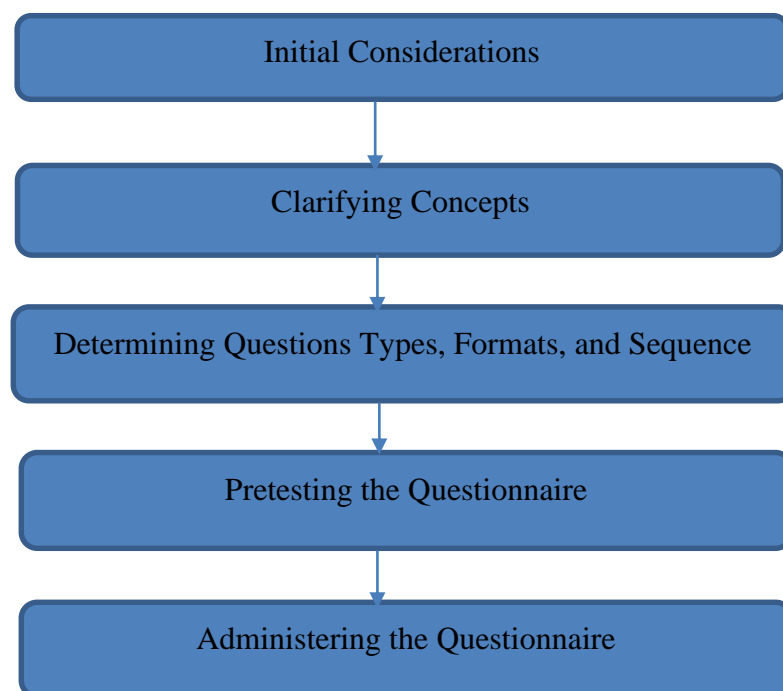


Figure 5.1: Questionnaire Development Procedures

Source: Adapted from Hair et al. (2011, p.249)

## **Step 1: Initial Considerations**

Following Hair et al. (2011), at this stage, prior to embarking on the questionnaire development, the researcher clearly defined the research problem, formulated research questions, and clarified research objectives. Also, the target population<sup>56</sup> that would respond to the questionnaire was precisely identified. Another essential consideration is the approach of administering the questionnaire, which is bifurcated into either self-completion or interviewer approach (Hair et al., 2011). The latter requires direct contact with the participants via personal “face-to-face” meetings or phone. However, the self-completed questionnaire does not require the existence of the researcher and can be distributed by mail, internet (e-questionnaire), and drop-off and collect methods (Hair et al., 2011).

The present study relied on both electronic self-administered questionnaires sent by email and typed paper and pencil self-administered questionnaires dropped off and collected manually. The researcher preferred to provide some flexibility for the HR or administrative managers in the contacted foreign companies/organisations to decide on the relevant and easy method of circulation among expatriates (i.e., target population). The benefits of self-administered methods are that: (1) they can be rapidly delivered to large numbers of participants at the same time with relatively low costs and less time; (2) respondents can complete it at their convenience with no pressure; and (3) there is no existence for the interviewer’s variability and bias (Hair et al., 2011; Bryman and Bell, 2015). In addition, they help to maintain the

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<sup>56</sup> More details will be discussed about population and sampling in the next section 5.5

respondents' anonymity that is quite essential to get credible and reliable answers to highly sensitive questions (Mitchell and Jolley, 2010)<sup>57</sup>.

## **Step 2: Clarifications of the Concepts**

The design of the questionnaire's structure, appearance, and content requires considering several aspects. First, the constructs (concepts) must be clearly defined, and the measurement method must be identified. Second, the researcher must decide on what questions should be asked, the way these questions should be worded, and the logical order and general layout of the questionnaire (Hair et al., 2011). These two aspects typically contend with what is named as "operational definition" that is defined as a set of questions and response alternatives used to measure a variable (Ruane, 2016). The questions must be carefully considered to closely tap into and consistently match the elements and dimensions of the construct (Sekaran and Bougie, 2012).

One essential step here is to precisely specify the level of measurement of the theoretical constructs before data collection to ensure the coincidence between the data and the level of the theory (Klein, Dansereau, and Hall, 1994). Following Klein et al. (1994), the present study adopted the level of "independence" that assumes that each individual is independent of the

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<sup>57</sup> Similarly, the advantages of employing online questionnaire are numerous. First, the questionnaire's link can be simply circulated to the target participants via their personal emails (if available), thereby enhancing confidence that the intended individual responded. In the present study, the researcher sent the survey link with all the required instructions by email to the respondents (i.e., expatriate; if their emails were available) to complete it individually anywhere at any time. Once finished, their complete responses are recorded automatically on the platform. Second, it can be delivered to wide base of respondents in geographically distant territories. Third, the role of the interviewer is not existent. Fourth, responses are less likely to be contaminated or distorted if well-designed. Fifth, a reasonable response rate of 30-50% can be achieved (Saunders et al., 2016). Ultimately, after finishing the data collection phase, the dataset can be downloaded easily. Consequently, no data will be manually entered in the software, and the likelihood of mistakes and time exerted in data processing will be minimised (Bryman and Bell, 2015).

group's impact in relation to the variables of interest. That is, a construct may be evaluated by an individual member differently from the other members of the same group. Reflecting one example on the previous assumption is that one American expatriate may perceive institutional distance differently from other expatriates within the same American cohort. Accordingly, the researcher is guided by Klein et al.'s (1994) advice to use measures that can be rated on each individual's unique characteristics and experience and to enhance the inter-individual variability. Hence, the present study tended to employ individual survey measures that can reflect each expatriate's unique experience independently from a diversified sample (Klein et al., 1994), including expatriates from different countries.

For the present study, each of the ten (10) theoretical constructs was operationalised on the individual level because they represented each expatriate's personal resources, perception, attitudes, and behaviours during their international assignments based on self-rating. Additionally, all the ten (10) concepts/constructs were operationalized drawing on validated measurement scales captured from prior research. Below is an explanation for how each individual construct was operationalized and measured, taking into account the influence of the Egyptian context:

Table 5.4: Measurement Scales of the Constructs

Concepts	Source of Measurement Scales	No. of Items
ID	Ramsey (2013)	15-items subdivided into 3 subscales: 5-items for the regulatory pillar, 5-items for the normative pillar, and 5-items for the cultural-cognitive pillar, with three sample items involved: "Amount of bureaucracy and red-tape that exists in the country", "People stay at the office after official office hours", and "Attitude toward new ideas", respectively. This scale was a good starting point, but it was subject to some adaptations and replacement of some

		items in some subcomponents with new items captured from themes presented in the context chapter to fit expatriates on long term assignments in the Egyptian context (More details about this will be covered step 4 “questionnaire pretest” and pilot study). This is to ensure that the entire scale captured the potential unique aspects that expatriates may experience and evaluate relative to their home country. These 15-items were measured on a 5-point Likert scale, ranging from 1 (very similar) to 5 (very different).
Adjustment	Black and Stephens (1989)	7-items subdivided into 2 subscales: 3-items for work aspect and 4-items for interaction component, with two sample items involved: “Job requirements” and “Interacting with host country nationals daily”, respectively. These 7-items were measured on a 5-point Likert scale, ranging from 1 (very unadjusted) to 5 (very adjusted).
Job Deprivation (autonomy, relatedness, and competence)	Kuvaas (2008) and van den Broeck et al. (2010)	15-items were derived from two scales. First, 5-items were adapted from Kuvaas’s (2008) scale for autonomy. Second, job deprivation competence and relatedness were measured using 10-items captured from van den Broeck et al.’s (2010) scale. Each dimension was assigned 5-items. These 15-items were entirely measured on a 5-point Likert scale, ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree). Sample items included: Compared to my previous home job, in Egypt ... “The job allows me more autonomy to decide about how to schedule my work (R)”, “I feel more competent at my job (R)”, and “I have more local (Egyptian) colleagues who are close friends of mine (R)” for autonomy, competence, and relatedness, respectively. Some of this scale’s items will be reverse coded so that high values should reflect high levels of relative deprivation. Additionally, this scale was adapted to reflect self-comparison (current job status on international assignment relative to prior job at the home country) and capture job deprivation regarding these three components.
Thriving	Porath et al. (2012)	10-items bifurcated into two subscales: 5-items for learning and 5-items for vitality, with two sample items involved: “I continue to learn more and more as time goes by” and “I feel alive and vital”, respectively. These 10-items were measured on a 5-point Likert scale, ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree).
CC-PsyCap	Clapp-Smith (2009)	This 16-items scale was originally developed by Luthans et al. (2007), which comprised 24-items. Clapp-Smith (2009) adapted this 24-items scale to fit employees working in diversified workplaces in different cultural contexts and minimised it to 16-items. Thus, it is believed

		to be more relevant for the expatriation context, compared to the traditional domestic scale developed by Luthans and his colleagues (2007). This concept comprised four sub-dimensions: cross-cultural hope, cross-cultural self-efficacy, cross-cultural resilience, and cross-cultural optimism, each of which was measured by 4-items. Sample items encompassed: “I feel confident that I can find my way around in a culture other than my own” (self-efficacy); “There are lots of ways around any problem that I face when in another culture t” (hope); “Even when things are tough, I can perform quite well in other cultures” (resilience); and “I always look on the bright side of things regarding what I experience in other cultures” (optimism). Therefore, these 16-items were used to measure cross-cultural psychological capital and the respondents were asked to rate their response on a 6-point Likert scale, ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 6(strongly agree).
Willingness to share tacit knowledge	Jiacheng et al. (2010),	4-items were measured on a 5-point Likert scale, ranging from 1 for “strongly disagree” to 5 for “strongly agree”. One sample item involved: “I intend to share my ideas with local team members as much as possible.”
Assignment renewal intention	Kraimer and Wayne (2004)	Kraimer and Wayne (2004) developed a 3-items scale to measure “intention to complete assignment”. Therefore, due to the non-availability of a scale measuring renewal intentions, the researcher adapted their 3-items scale to reflect “current assignment renewal intention”. For example, in their scale, one sample item included: “I am seriously considering ending my expatriate assignment early”. Accordingly, it was adapted to be “I am seriously considering renewing my current expatriate assignment again.” These new three adapted items were measured as well on a 5-point Likert scale, ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree).
Performance	Caligiuri et al. (2016)	6-items were divided into two subscales and assigned as 3-items for task performance and 3-items for contextual performance, with two sample items, included: “Carrying out task requirements in this role” and “Developing and maintaining good professional relationships abroad2, respectively. Respondents were asked to rate their responses on a 5-point Likert scale, ranging from 1 (very poor) to 5 (outstanding).



### **Step 3: Determining Question Types, Format, and Sequence**

Two main dominant question types are broadly used in questionnaires: open-ended and closed-ended questions. In the former type, the respondents are not constrained, as they have discretion in deciding how to answer the questions in their own words. In the latter, the respondents are asked to select an appropriate answer from a set of structured multiple answers predetermined by the researcher (Denscombe, 2014; Hair et al., 2011). The questions constructed in the present study's questionnaire were closed-ended because they can be easily quantified and compared. Also, pre-coded data<sup>58</sup> facilitate data collection (i.e., easy for respondents to answer), data entry, and statistical analysis.

The wording of questions was an essential aspect that was carefully taken into consideration to develop good and effective questions. Accordingly, the researcher followed some suggested guidelines in the present study. First, the questions were formulated clearly and concisely using simple language free from any vague, jargon terms (expressions known by some people but not others), and colloquialisms (informal expressions known only to English native speakers, given the fact that the questionnaire's language is English) (Hair et al., 2011; Easterby-Smith et al., 2015). As the respondents are expatriates coming from different cultural backgrounds, the researcher strived to use words that can be neutrally understood and interpreted by all respondents from different cultures (Sekaran and Bougie, 2012). Second, the researcher tended

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<sup>58</sup> As mentioned in the previous step, all the questionnaire's questions were measured using Likert (Interval) scale because it is useful in measuring opinions, attitudes, and behaviours. (Hair et al., 2011). All the constructs were measured on a 5-point Likert scales following prior scholars used the same constructs, except for "CC-PsyCap" that was measured on a 6-point Likert scale consistent with its original scale. Also, no constructs were measured using less than 3-items to ensure sufficient reliability (Hair et al., 2011). Finally, all the demographics (e.g., age, gender, education, sector, job level, etc) were measured using categorical (ordinal ranked) scales with a blend of multiple choice and dichotomous questions (Hair et al., 2011).

to avoid long questions, as this was believed to minimise rates of high non-response and errors emerging from their rapid answers before fully reading long questions (Hair et al., 2011)<sup>59</sup>. Third, both double-barrelled questions (i.e., those covering two issues) and leading questions (i.e., those guiding respondents to a particular/desirable answer) were avoided (Hair et al., 2011). Fourth, a good questionnaire is characterized by encompassing both negatively and positively worded questions. The researcher adopted this principle because it allowed for detecting respondents who were non-alert and inattentive, and those who tended to be biased toward one extreme of the scale (Sekaran and Bougie, 2012). The previous procedure was also important to control the CMB that would be discussed in section 5.6.

After deciding on the types and the wording of questions, it was essential to delineate how the entire questionnaire will be structured. Following Hair et al.'s (2011) guidance, the entire questionnaire was split into three main sections. The first section included a few opening questions. More specifically, a screening question (filtering question) is one kind of opening question that was initially included at the beginning of the survey to ensure that each expatriate responding to the questionnaire met the predetermined yardsticks<sup>60</sup> set to the target population, and to establish a good rapport and friendly ambience with them. This was essential to stimulate their cooperation to participate. One example of the used screening questions is "Are you currently working in a full-time job in Egypt?". The second section comprised the questions pertaining to the main research topics and they were organised by topic. Lastly, the classification questions (i.e., demographics) seeking personal information were placed at the

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<sup>59</sup> No statement (question) in the present study's questionnaire exceeded the rule of thumb of 20 words (Thomas, 2004; Sekaran and Bougie, 2012).

<sup>60</sup> Five opening questions were developed to ensure the respondents' eligibility to participate in the present study before starting the main targeted questions (see the questionnaire in appendix C).

end of the questionnaire because some of these questions might be regarded as sensitive. Therefore, placing them at the end could increase the response rate and minimise error (Hair et al., 2011).

The final procedure in this step is to check the layout and presentation of the questions, especially for both mail and electronic self-completion questionnaires (Hair et al., 2011). This was essential because poorly structured and presented questionnaires might result in low response rates. To ensure an appropriate layout, the researcher first attached a covering letter with the questionnaire, which displayed the nature and objectives of the research, highlighted some ethical considerations (e.g., ensuring participants' anonymity and data confidentiality), and provided the researcher and supervisors' contact details. If well-written, it could stimulate the target participants to take part (Wilson, 2014). Then, each section was headed and accompanied by instructions to the respondents regarding how to answer the question (Hair et al., 2011)<sup>61</sup>.

#### **Step 4: Pretesting the Questionnaire (i.e., pilot study)**

According to Hair et al. (2011), the researcher should assess the likely consistency and accuracy of the responses before widely administering the questionnaire. This can be

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<sup>61</sup> Another essential aspect of the questionnaire's layout was the length of the questionnaire. It is not always a simple task to construct an optimal length for the questionnaire (Wilson, 2014). The longevity of the questionnaire may deter and discourage respondents from completing the questionnaire and affect response rate. Unsurprisingly, however, scholars tend to administer long questionnaires relative to short ones because they allow for generating adequate dataset (Wilson, 2014; Ruane, 2016). Although there are no absolute rules for the length of questionnaire, it is generally advisable not to design questionnaires taking more than 30 minutes from the respondent to complete (Ruane, 2016). To determine the appropriate time, it is quite useful to conduct a pilot study (Wilson, 2014). The present study's pilot study details will be illustrated in the next stage. Ultimately, the questionnaire ended up with thanking the respondents for their cooperation and participation in completing the questionnaire (Saunders et al., 2016), along with restating the researcher's contact details.

accomplished by conducting a small pilot study (Wilson, 2014) to pre-test the questionnaire on a small sample of respondents who are similar to the final target population (Hair et al., 2011). The pilot study aims at refining the questionnaire prior to the final wide administration to the main target population and assessing the questions' validity and reliability.

The present study followed Saunders et al.'s (2016) two-step procedures for undertaking the pilot study. The first step entailed the researcher initially starting up by asking a group of experts to provide comments on the relevance of the questions and the structure of the questionnaire. This procedure contributed to the establishment of the face validity and allowed for detecting necessary modifications before the pilot test (Saunders et al., 2016). This procedure was commonly adopted by prior management scholars (see Jiang, 2017). As the majority of the present study's constructs were originated and validated in the Western context, and some of them were not verified in the Egyptian or any similar context, it was recommended to check their face validity.

Consistent with this, a judging panel of 5 scholars was formulated to assess the content validity of the questions. Three of them were Western experts in the field of expatriation management and organisational psychology. The remaining two were Egyptian scholars specialised in the HRM and OB fields, who were also familiar with the Egyptian context. This panel was requested to evaluate the questionnaire's content validity based on two criteria of whether each set of questions/items: (1) reflected their intended construct precisely; and (2) were suitable and of utility to be asked to expatriates in the Egyptian context. Following prior scholars' cut-off value of 80% (MacKenzie, Podsakoff, and Fetter, 1991), the items/questions considered to be meeting the two prespecified criteria simultaneously by four of those judges were kept. (Jiang et al., 2017).

This initial step suggested the non-suitability of two items in the cultural-cognitive original subscale of institutional distance to be asked to expatriate on their long-term international assignment. These two items were “beliefs toward money-making” and “beliefs toward profitability.” To replace these two excluded items, the researcher drew on the extant literature (e.g., Hall, 1989; Maurer and Li, 2006) in conjunction with the consultation with the judging panel to develop two alternative items, namely “attitudes toward working relationships” and “communication styles adopted.” These two generated items are conceived by the previous scholars to vary culturally and cognitively.

In addition, the two Egyptian judges provided a few suggestions, such as contextualising and adapting a few items to fit the local Egyptian workplace context. For example, one original item of the job deprivation-relatedness scale was “At work, I feel more part of a group” After considering this suggestion, it was adapted and contextualised as “At the Egyptian workplace, I feel more part of a group”. Another example on the same scale was “I don’t really feel more connected with other people at my job”. After contextualisation, it was reformulated as “I don’t really feel more connected with local colleagues at my job.”

The second step included pilot testing the questionnaire on a small sample of respondents assimilating the original target population that would actually fill in the questionnaire (Saunders et al., 2016). Indeed, it was difficult to pilot test the questionnaire on a sample of the original target population (expatriates working in Egypt) due to time and financial resources constraints. Alternatively, the researcher directed the questionnaire to ten (10) expatriate academics from different nationalities, who were working at Essex Business School at that time. Those expatriate academics were kindly asked to fill in the questionnaire. The main purpose of this step was to check: (1) the duration of the questionnaire’s completion; (2) the

clarity of instructions; (3) the existence of unclear, confusing, or psychologically discomfort causing questions; (4) the layout attractiveness and clarity; and (5) any other comments for improvements (Saunders et al., 2016).

The respondents of this small sample completed the questionnaire within 12-15 minutes. Linking this to the previously mentioned threshold of a maximum of 30 minutes, it seemed that the length of the questionnaire was very reasonable. In addition, they did not raise any problem in understanding the questions, thereby confirming the absence of any vague language. Exceptionally, only one minor issue was captured regarding one item in the “interaction adjustment” original scale, which included the abbreviation “HCN”. The respondents suggested writing what this acronym stood for to be made clearer to the study’s main participants. Accordingly, this acronym was written as “host country nationals”. Finally, they stipulated the clarity of the instructions and the well-organisation and presentation of the questionnaire. As a result, the present study’s questionnaire achieved the face validity yardstick.

### **Step 5: Administering the Questionnaire**

According to Hair et al. (2011), there exist several ways to administer the questionnaire for the purpose of data collection, encompassing mail, fax, phone, in person, or electronically via mail. The current study espoused both the in-person and electronic modes. Accordingly, an online version of the questionnaire was created on Qualtrics platform, resulting in the creation of a survey link that was contemplated to be distributed easily by email either directly to expatriates whose contact details were available or indirectly by the assistance of the HR or administrative

managers contacted by emails. In addition, hard copies were printed to be available for distribution in person via the assistance of the in-charge manager during the field visits.

## **5.5. Population and Sampling Method**

For business management scholars, it is quite essential to gather data despite whether the nature of research is quantitative or qualitative (Hair et al., 2011). Equally important, after developing the data collection instrument, the elements from which the data will be gathered should be identified and selected (Ghauri and Gronhaug, 2010). Data collection can be undertaken by employing either “consensus” or “sampling” techniques (Hair et al., 2011). The census approach contends with collecting data from all the elements/cases in the study’s population. However, in reality, it is doubtful and impractical to gather data from all the elements/cases due to budget and time constraints (Wilson, 2014; Saunders et al., 2016). Accordingly, the need for sampling is imperative, which entails drawing a small number of elements/cases/units (i.e., subset) of the entire population using a range of sampling mechanisms (Wilson, 2014; Saunders et al., 2016). The sampling approach is extremely important in quantitative studies (Ghauri and Gronhaug, 2010), which was embraced as an appropriate approach in the present study. Five-stage procedures were undertaken in the present study, following the suggestions of Hair et al. (2011), Sekaran and Bougie (2012, and Wilson (2014). These procedures are illustrated in the following figure:



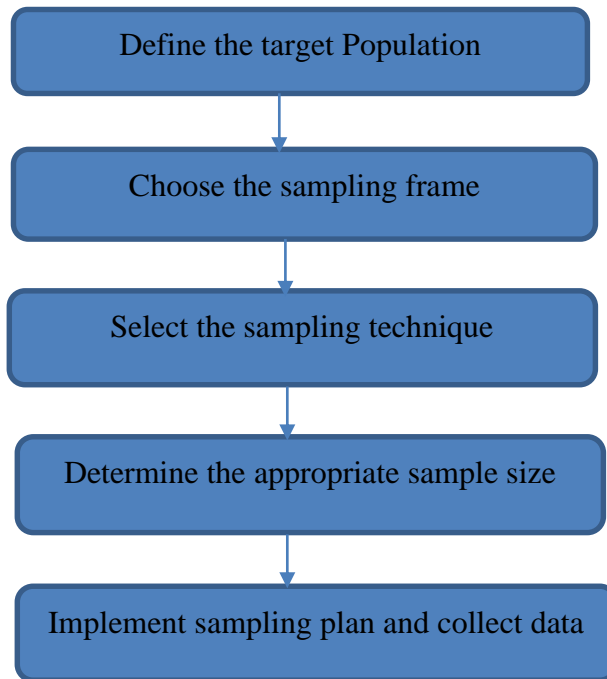


Figure 5.2: Stages for Drawing a Sample

Source: Adapted from (Hair et al., 2011, p.165; Sekaran and Bougie, 2012, p.266; Wilson, 2014, p.124)

### **Stage 1: Define the Target Population**

The target population must be precisely and clearly determined as an initial sampling step (Sekaran and Bougie, 2012). The target population refers to “the complete group of objects or elements relevant to the research project” (Hair et al., 2011, p.165). The precise definition of the relevant population is not always a simple step, as it is largely reliant on some factors, such as the research questions and context, the availability and accessibility to sampling units (e.g., companies, individual, household, etc), time, and geographical location (Hair et al., 2011; Wilson, 2014).

For the present study, the target population comprised all business expatriates<sup>62</sup> (non-Egyptians), either self-initiated or organisations, who were formally granted a work permit issued by the Ministry of Manpower, Immigration, and Nationality to work for a period of at least one year or more in the subsidiaries of foreign companies operating in both industrial (e.g., oil and textiles) and service (e.g., education and banking/finance) sectors in Egypt. According to the most recent report issued by the Ministry of Manpower, Immigration, and Nationality (2017/2018) prior to data collection, the total number of expatriates with granted work permits distributed based on clustered continents are shown in the following table 5.5:

Table 5.5: The number of Expatriates based on Clustered Continents

Continents-based Nationalities	1 <sup>st</sup> Time Issued Work Permit	Renewed Work Permit	Total	Percentage (%)
Expatriates from Asian Countries	2015	3218	5233	38.9%
Expatriates from European Countries	1970	1939	3909	29.8%
Expatriates from Arab countries	848	2149	2997	22.2%
Expatriates from America and Australia	454	539	993	7.4%
Other Nationalities	78	96	174	1.3%
Expatriates from African Countries	76	87	163	1.2%
Total	5441	8028	13469	100%

Source: Ministry of Manpower, Immigration, and Nationality (2017/2018, p.37)

## Stage 2: Determine the Sampling Frame:

The sampling frame is “a comprehensive list of the elements from which the sample is drawn” (Hair et al., 2011, p.166). For the present study, the sampling frame encompassed all the expatriates working in foreign companies/organisations in both industrial and service sectors

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<sup>62</sup>Expatriate who are on diplomatic missions/assignments are excluded from the population.

in only five governorates in the following professions in Egypt as displayed in the following table 5.6:

Table 5.6: The Number of Expatriates based on Professions and Geographical Location.

<b>Professions</b>	<b>1<sup>st</sup> Time Issued Work Permit</b>	<b>Renewed Work Permit</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>Percentage (%)</b>
Technicians and Specialist Assistants	1878	2151	4029	29.9%
CEO and Executives	1174	2190	3364	25%
Academic Specialists	1675	1501	3176	23.6%
Craftsmen	338	819	1157	8.6%
Factories Workers	144	765	909	6.7%
Peasants and Animal Breeding Labour	20	203	223	1.7%
Service and Merchandise Shops Workers	107	177	284	2.1%
Administrative Professions	81	125	206	1.56%
Other Normal Labour	121	97	24	0.9%
<b>Total</b>	<b>5441</b>	<b>8028</b>	<b>13469</b>	<b>100%</b>
<b>Geographical Location (Governorates)</b>	<b>1<sup>st</sup> Time Issued</b>	<b>Renewed</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Cairo	1418	1799	3217	61.45%
Giza	1222	400	1622	30.98%
Qualubya	8	34	42	0.81%
Alexandria	22	75	97	1.85%
Sharkiya	18	239	257	4.91%
<b>Total</b>	<b>2688</b>	<b>2547</b>	<b>5235</b>	<b>100%</b>

Source: Ministry of Manpower, Immigration, and Nationality (2017/2018, p.37-38)

As evident in table5.7, the total number of expatriates was classified into 9 categories. However, three professions, including the peasants, service and merchandise, and other non-categorised professions, were excluded because expatriates in such professions might be low educated and not qualified enough to perfectly fit in the present study's participation criteria (e.g., expatriates working in security services). Concerning the geographical proximity, the focus was on expatriates working in only 5 governorates, namely Cairo, Giza, Qualubya,

Alexandria, and Sharkiya. However, it is worth mentioning that the aforementioned report did not include classifications of the previously mentioned professions in these 5 governorates<sup>63</sup>.

Despite the availability of the actual overall number of all expatriates working in Egypt in the selected 6 professions and 5 geographical locations, to date, there is no single, clear, valid, accurate, and comprehensive sampling frame (i.e., directory) that comprises the foreign companies/organisations' contact details and expatriates' actual numbers and contact details in each of these companies/organisations simultaneously. The same problem was commonly encountered by one previous Egyptian PhD researcher who conducted her research on expatriates in Egypt as well, stating that "obtaining a sample frame for the population of expatriates in Egypt was not possible as a complete list did not exist" (Khedr, 2011, p.103). In such a case, Wilson (2014) proposed that when researchers suffer a lack of access to a definitive directory to be used as a sampling frame, they should develop their own sampling frame, albeit being challenging and time-consuming process. Accordingly, the researcher exerted influential efforts to get access to multiple sources and complement them to develop a sampling frame, such as the General Authority for Investment and Free Zones' directory, chambers of commerce's directories (e.g., American Chamber of Commerce) wherever available on their websites, international schools' directory, foreign cultural bureaus' websites, and LinkedIn.

Notwithstanding, the sampling frame developed by the researcher at that stage might still be incomplete or inaccurate. Saunders et al. (2016) state that the incomplete sampling frame

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<sup>63</sup> The reasons underlying the selection of these 5 governorates are threefold: (1) given the time and financial resources constraints, these 5 governorates were physically proximate, so that the researcher could travel easily to contact the companies/organisations' gatekeepers, negotiate access, conduct field visits, and follow up with them; (2) expatriates were concentrated in larger numbers in these governorates, particularly in the greater Cairo as evident in table 5.7; and (3) the researcher possessed good social relational connections in those governorates, which have already helped him in data collection.

means that there will be some cases still not having the chance of inclusion, as sometimes directories are limited only to the elements that pay subscriptions to be listed. Concomitantly, Saunders et al. (2016) highlight that the sample frame is essential to be obtained if probability sampling methods will be used. Hence, it can be inferred that the non-availability of a reliable sampling frame is not problematic, as the present study is more inclined to be using the non-probability sampling techniques for some other reasons that are not limited only to sampling frame issues as will be discussed in the next stage.

### **Stage 3: Select the Sampling Technique**

Sampling techniques are bifurcated into two main categories: probability and non-probability sampling techniques. The former means that each element has an equal opportunity for inclusion in the sample (Ghauri and Gronhaug, 2010). By contrast, the latter means that each element does not have a known opportunity to be chosen as a subject in the sample. The choice between the two techniques largely depends on some factors, such as the relevant target population, the parameters of interest, the availability of sampling frame, and the cost and time available for data collection (Sekaran and Bougie, 2012). Besides, the choice of sampling technique for the present study is driven by the complicated nature of the Egyptian context.

According to Hatem (1994) and Leat and El-Kot (2007), data collection in Egypt is extremely difficult. In addition, any primary data collected via surveys should involve special and tiring governmental permissions (Parnell and Hatem, 1999). One example is the long bureaucratic procedures to get security approval<sup>64</sup>. Not only the incomplete responses received but also the

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<sup>64</sup> This procedure has been considered and a security approval has been granted to conduct the present study. For more details on this, please see the data collection procedures in appendix (D).

existence of uncooperative respondents and managers make data collection sophisticated. Thus, the collected responses are more likely to suffer from reliability and validity problems. Consequently, it is suggested that if primary data will be collected in Egypt, convenience sampling is deemed to be the most appropriate sampling technique because other sampling forms may not guarantee to collect sufficient data (Leat and El-Kot, 2007; Hatem, 1994; Mostafa and Gould-Williams, 2014). Consistent with this, the present study embraced the convenience sampling technique<sup>65</sup>. Additionally, due to the expected difficulty in accessing the unique population of expatriates, snowball<sup>66</sup> sampling was employed as well.

Ultimately, it is noteworthy to highlight that both convenience and snowball sampling techniques were used by prior expatriation scholars (see Shen and Jiang, 2015; Selmer et al., 2000; Khedr, 2011; Trompeter et al., 2016; Nunes et al., 2017; Zhao et al., 2020; Dimitrova et al., 2020).

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<sup>65</sup> According to Hair et al., (2011, p.175), “a convenience sample involves selecting sample elements that are most readily available to participate in the study and can provide the information required”. This is a non-random sampling method, in which members’ selection is based on what is convenient and easily accessible to the researcher (Sekaran and Bougie, 2012; Wilson, 2014). The advantage of convenience sample is that it allows the researcher to collect large number of surveys rapidly and cost effectively. However, it may limit the generalizability of results to the target population (Hair et al., 2011; Sekaran and Bougie, 2012).

<sup>66</sup> Similarly, “snowball sampling is a non-random sampling method that uses a few cases to help encourage other cases to take part in the study, thereby increasing sample size” (Wilson, 2014, p.218). This technique excessively relies on social networks and referrals (Ruane, 2016). This sampling approach is mainly beneficial and effective in developing the sample size, but it may be time-consuming and limit the researcher’s control over cases in the sample (Wilson, 2014). Brewerton and Millward (2001; cited in Wilson, 2014, p.218) state that this approach is more relevant to population with closed nature and difficult accessibility. Empirical research described expatriates as a “hard to reach” cohort because of holding important executive positions in geographically dispersed locations (Culpan and Wright, 2002). This also perfectly matched the narrow expatriate community in Egypt. To further support the previous fact, in Khedr’s (2011) study, expatriates in Egypt are treated as “experts” and granted the “elite” status.

## **Stage 4: Determine the Appropriate Sample Size**

The main driver in deciding on the appropriate sample size for the present study is the employed statistical analysis method. In the present study, structural equation modelling (SEM) was the mainly employed statistical technique to analyse the current study's data. To date, there is no general consensus among scholars regarding the determination of the appropriate sample size when using SEM, which constitutes a challenge confronted by them (Wolf, Harrington, Clark, and Miller, 2013). Several different rules of thumb have been reviewed in this regard. For example, Lattin, Carrol, and Green (2003) recommend obtaining 8-10 observations per variable for the application of SEM and other multivariate techniques. Putting this into action, the current study included 10 main constructs, comprising 19 variables. Thus, a sample size of 190 observations is required.

Another rule of thumb entails having 5-10 observations per parameter. Minimally speaking, a sample size of 200 can help to get trustworthy estimates (Garver and Mentzer, 1999, p.47). In a similar vein, Hoe (2008, p.77) outlines that sufficient statistical power can be obtained when the sample size exceeds 200. Conversely, Iacobucci (2010, p.92) states that "it is of some comfort that SEM can perform well, even with small samples (e.g., 50 to 100). The vague, folklore rule of thumb considering requisite sample size ( $n > 200$ ) can be conservative and is surely simplistic."

It is argued that there exist some factors influencing the requirements of the sample size for SEM, such as the amount of missing data, the model's complexity (i.e., include more constructs and indicators), the estimation technique, and the multivariate normality (Hair, Black, Babin, and Anderson, 2014). Under ideal circumstances, the maximum likelihood method of

estimation generates reliable and valid results with a sample size of 50. Under less ideal conditions, a sample size of 200 is sufficient to produce sound estimations. Moreover, when the model's complexity increases, accompanied by missing and non-normal data, larger sample sizes are required and vice versa (Hair et al., 2014). To conclude, Hair et al. (2014, p.576) annotated that "no matter the modelling approach, the sample size must be sufficient to allow the model to run."

In the light of reviewing the previous rules of thumb, the complexity of the present study's conceptual model, and the difficulty of data collection from expatriates in Egypt, a sample size of 300-400 was deemed appropriate for the present study.

### **Stage 5: Implement the Sampling Plan and Collect your Data**

Once all the previous sampling design steps were agreed upon, the researcher should start data collection. In the present study, the data collection procedures included several steps (please see appendix D for more details).



## **5.6. Controlling Common Method Bias**

According to Podsakoff, Mackenzie, Lee, and Podsakoff (2003), common method bias (CMB) constitutes a major concern to behavioural researchers. CMB denoted the variance engendered from the measurement method instead of the measured constructs. Podsakoff et al. (2003) argue that method bias is problematic because it is considered as one of the key sources of measurement errors that intimidate the validity of the concluded relationships between measures.

Although there are multiple statistical and procedural remedies to mitigate the effects of the bias method, there is no one best way to control the CMB because it depends on the sources of variance existing in the study and the availability of feasible remedies (Podsakoff et al., 2003; Podsakoff, Mackenzie, and Podsakoff, 2012). Both remedies are discussed below:

### **5.6.1. Procedural Remedies**

One possible effective procedural remedy could be obtaining measures from different sources (Podsakoff et al., 2003; Podsakoff et al., 2012). For example, by reflecting this remedy on the present study, local Egyptian colleagues could rate some variables (e.g., expatriate's willingness to share knowledge and adjustment) and expatriates could rate the remaining variables. However, this option was impossible to be conducted in Egypt because the request was declined by the companies' managers for private reasons. Accordingly, this remedy was excluded because it was impractical to the study's sample.

Another suggested solution could be collecting data temporally at two separate waves (Podsakoff et al., 2003; Podsakoff et al., 2012). For example, collecting the predictors (independent variables) at time 1 and the dependent variables at time 2 (i.e., one month later).

Despite the existence of evidence supporting the effectiveness of this remedy in reducing some method biases, it is not without disadvantages. Such limitations include increasing research design sophistication and costs, a high likelihood of losing participants in wave 2, and difficulty of deciding on the appropriate delay that varies across relationships (e.g., short delays may be ineffective and long delay may allow some intervening factors to influence the dependent variables). Moreover, practically, this was impossible to be conducted in Egypt because the companies' managers might not be able to allow me to access questionnaires to expatriates more than one time due to the latter's busy time. Hence, this remedy was also declined.

In this essence, the present study adopted some other feasible procedural remedies followed by prior expatriation scholars (see Kawai and Mohr, 2017). First, anonymity and confidentiality were confirmed to the respondents, along with informing them that there were no true or wrong answers in the questionnaire's instructions. Second, the researcher used obvious and precise language and tried to avoid complicated/vague terms and double-barrelled questions (Podsakoff et al., 2012). The previous two points have been carefully considered as previously elaborated in the questionnaire design (see section 5.4.1). Third, the questionnaire's items were organised randomly (Chang, van Witteloostuijn, and Eden, 2010). Fourth, psychological separation was also embraced in the way that the measurement of the predictors (ID and adjustment) were set into different stances in the questionnaire to appear unrelated to the dependent variables' measurement. Also, each set of questions was provided with different instructions. Fifth, some items were reverse-coded (Podsakoff et al., 2003; Podsakoff et al., 2012). However, reverse coded items were argued to cause some confusion to the respondents. Therefore, it was suggested to use statistical methods in conjunction with the reverse-coded items, which would be discussed in the next subsection.

### **5.6.2. Statistical Remedies**

Besides conducting the aforementioned procedural remedies, some statistical remedies were used to detect the CMB as well. The present study employed the two commonly used statistical methods, namely the “unmeasured latent method factor technique” and “Harman’s single-factor test” (Podsakoff et al., 2003, p.889). Conventionally, the latter entails inserting all the study’s items into an exploratory factor analysis and investigating the number of factors in the unrotated solution. This test assumed that if either one single factor emerged or one single factor captured the majority of covariance, the CMB would substantially present (Podsakoff et al., 2003). In the meantime, researchers shift attention toward using confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) because it is a more rigorous technique in evaluating whether one single factor may extract the whole variance in the data (Podsakoff et al., 2003). Therefore, the current study would employ CFA to run Harman’s test.

Nonetheless, Harman’s test is not free from limitations. Podsakoff et al. (2003) outlined that this test is not sensitive because it is improbable to find one single-factor fitting the data. Thus, Harman’s test is just a diagnostic tool to evaluate whether CMB is problematic or not. Consequently, the “unmeasured latent method factor” would be used as another statistical tool to diagnose the CMB. In this technique, a latent factor is added, whose indicators are the same indicators of the theoretical constructs. In other words, all the indicators are permitted to load on both the unmeasured latent factor and the designated theoretical constructs (Podsakoff et al., 2003; Podsakoff et al., 2012). This approach’s advantages are threefold: “(1) it does not require the researcher to measure the specific factor responsible for the method effect; (2) it models the effect of the method factor at the measurement level rather than at the latent

construct level; and (3) it does not require the effects of the method factor on each measure to be equal” (Podsakoff et al., 2012, p.553).

The statistical results of both techniques will be presented and discussed in the next chapter 6.

## **5.7. Data Analysis Techniques**

Given the present study’s theoretical model/framework, structural equation modeling (SEM) was recommended as an appropriate statistical technique to analyse empirical data. Cheung (2013) alleges that SEM is now a pervasive modeling technique applied in both social and behavioral fields. SEM is a multivariate statistical technique that integrates multiple regression and factor analysis to simultaneously examine the inter-related relationships between latent constructs and measured variables as well as between multiple latent constructs (Hair et al., 2014). In particular, SEM utilises the confirmatory approach (hypotheses testing) to analyse a structural theory based on a specific phenomenon. Thus, SEM is premised on two procedures: (1) a series of structural equations that represent the causal processes; and (2) the structural relationships are depicted to provide a more evident conceptualization of the investigated theory (Byrne, 2012). In other words, SEM is effective in hypothesis testing and inferential data analysis, in which the hypothesised relationships are based on well-grounded theory. It is a flexible technique in modelling the relationships between exogenous and endogenous variables, and it uses empirical data to statistically examine theoretical assumptions (Hoe, 2008). To epitomise, SEM is relevant to be used when the researcher has several constructs, each of which is captured by a set of items/measures variables, and these constructs are differentiated based on being either endogenous or exogenous (Hair et al., 2014).

Unlike other old generations of multivariate techniques, SEM is attached with several advantages. First, it allows for estimating multiple inter-dependent relations. Thus, this implies that it can incorporate several dependent variables at the same time (Hair et al., 2014). Second, it can also incorporate both latent and observed variables simultaneously and provide accurate estimates and improvements for the measurement error (Hair et al., 2014; Byrne, 2012). Third, it requires the definition/identification of the model for explaining the entire theoretical relationships (Hair et al., 2014). Finally, it is the sole easily and widely applied multivariate technique to estimate the indirect effects (Byrne, 2012).

In alignment with all these previous distinct features, SEM would be used to analyse the present study's data in the next chapter 6.

### **5.7.1. SEM Procedures**

The present study executed the unique six-stage procedures recommended by Hair et al, (2014) to ensure the proper model specification and the validity of results. These 6 steps are portrayed in the following figure 5.3:

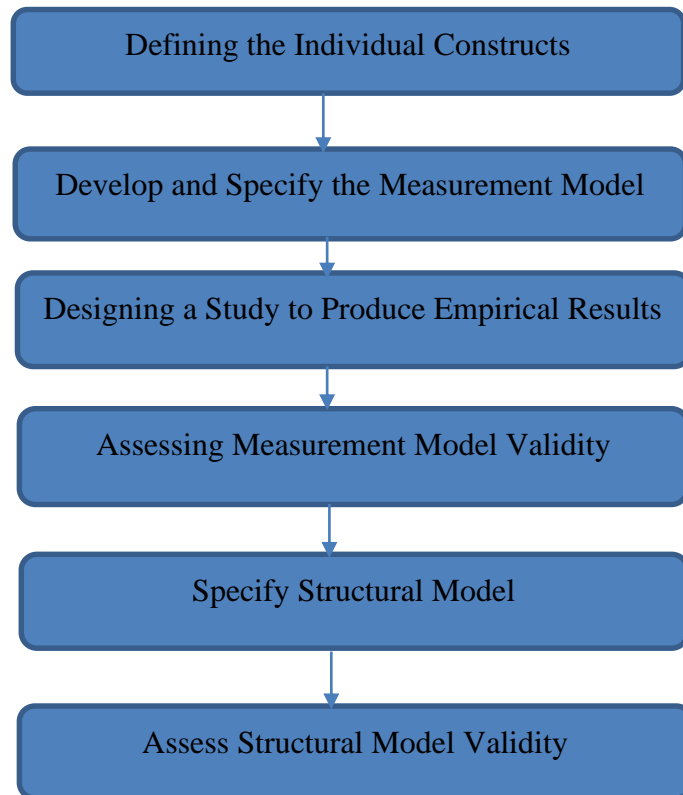


Figure 5.3: Structural Equation Modelling Stages

Source: Adapted from (Hair et al., 2011, p.565)

### **Stage 1: Defining the Individual Constructs**

This step is typically associated with the operationalisation of the investigated constructs, which largely depends on the existence of a good measurement theory to get effective findings of SEM (Hair et al., 2014). A good theoretical definition of constructs is crucial because it establishes the basis for selecting/designing the measurement scale items (i.e., individual indicators). Researchers can operationalise constructs by either using scales previously performed effectively in published academic studies or developing new ones. In essence, the

present study utilised the existing scales already developed and used by prior scholars (see section 5.4.1).

## **Stage 2: Developing and Specifying the Measurement Model**

Following Hair et al. (2014), the present study specified the measurement model by identifying all latent constructs and allocating each set of individual indicators to their designated latent construct. This was simply and visually presented by a diagram incorporating each latent construct with its assigned indicators, error terms for indicators, and correlation between latent constructs (Hair et al., 2014).

## **Stage 3: Designing a Study to Produce Empirical Results**

After model specification, researchers must shift attention to both research design and estimation-related issues. For the research design aspect, 3 issues were addressed: (1) the kind of analysed data; (2) the sample size effect; and (3) the effect of missing data and solutions. In the first issue, the researcher must carefully specify the kind of data (metric vs non-metric) for each measured (observed) variable. Metric data (e.g., ordinal or interval) have traditionally dominated measured variables (Hair et al., 2014). This issue has been covered in this chapter (see step 3 in section 5.4.1). The second issue (sample size) has also been discussed (see stage 4 in section 5.5). Lastly, missing data is problematic for researchers when utilising SEM (Enders and Bandalos, 2001). The statistical literature provides some well-known techniques that are widely recommended as remedies to handle missing data. These techniques encompass: “(1) listwise deletion; (2) pairwise deletion; (3) hot desk computation; (4) mean substitution; and (5) regression computation” (Roth, Switzer, and Switzer, 1999, p.212; Hair et al., 2014; p.53). More details will be discussed on these techniques in the next chapter 6.

Regarding model estimation, the researcher must also decide on 3 aspects: (1) model structure; (2) estimation technique; and (3) computer programme. First, for model structure, a path diagram will be used to link the theoretical model to the program, along with deciding on both the fixed and free parameters. Second, the maximum likelihood was chosen as the mathematical algorithm to estimate free parameters. Compared to other estimation techniques, maximum likelihood is the default, flexible, and widely used approach in SEM, which is capable of providing reliable and unbiased results when normality is assumed to exist (Hair et al., 2014). Third, regarding computer programmes, Hair et al. (2014) outline that the choice of SEM program is driven by availability and researchers' preferences. Accordingly, the Analysis of Moment Structure (AMOS 25) program was selected to run SEM. Besides its pervasive popularity, it comes at the top of SEM programs in using a "graphical interface for all functions", thereby diminishing the need for complicated codes and syntax commands (Hair et al., 2014, p.575). One of its remarkable features is that it enables users to use this graphical interface to easily and directly depict the path diagram on the screen via different shapes (Steiger, 2001).

#### **Stage 4: Assessing Measurement Model Validity**

The most crucial question in testing SEM is whether the measurement model is valid or not. The validation of the measurement model is contingent on: (1) yielding adequate goodness of fit for the model; and (2) documenting the construct validity (Hair et al., 2014).

The goodness of fit (GOF) is a pointer of how well the estimated theoretical model assimilates the observed/actual covariance matrix. In other words, it compares theory to reality. That is, if the theory is well established, there will be no difference between the estimated and observed



covariance matrices. The greater the similarity between the two matrices, the better the model fit. GOF measures are categorised into three packages: “Absolute fit indices”<sup>67</sup>, “Incremental fit indices”<sup>68</sup>, and “Parsimony fit indices”<sup>69</sup> (Hair et al., 2014).

The most contested question is what constitutes a good or satisfactory fit. The answer depends on identifying what best indices are and what objective threshold values for each fit index are to propose a good model (Hair et al., 2014). Despite the availability of a wider range of fit indices elaborated above, the extant research outlined that there is no need for researchers to document all the goodness of fit indices due to their redundancy. Therefore, it is suggested to report at least one incremental index and one absolute index, along with the Chi-Square ( $\chi^2$ ) value. More specifically, it is stipulated that “reporting the ( $\chi^2$ ) value and the degrees of freedom, the CFI or TLI, and the RMSEA will usually provide sufficient unique information to evaluate a model” (Hair et al., 2014, p.583). Therefore, the present study would adopt reporting the previously mentioned fit indices to assess the model fit in accordance with the cut-off values displayed in the following table:

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<sup>67</sup> “Absolute fit indices” assess directly the extent to which the specified model assimilates the actual data. This bundle of indices comprises “Chi<sup>2</sup> Square ( $\chi^2$ )”, “Goodness of Fit index (GFI)”, “Root Mean Square Error of Approximation (RMSEA)”, “Standardized Root Mean Residual (SRMR)”, and “Normed Chi-Square” (Hair et al., 2014).

<sup>68</sup> “Incremental fit indices” testify to what extent the estimated model fit better relative to baseline model (Hair et al., 2014). The baseline model is also known as “null” model, which proposes no covariance between the observed variables (Kline, 2011, p.196). The parcel of incremental indices involves “Comparative Fit Index (CFI)”, Tucker-Lewis Index (TLI is also referred to as Non-Normed Fit Index)”, “Normed Fit Index (NFI)”, and “Relative Non-Central Index (RNI)” (Hair et al., 2014).

<sup>69</sup> “Parsimony fit indices provide information about which model among a set of competing models is best, considering its fit relative to its complexity” (Hair et al., 2014, p.580). The parsimony fit is ameliorated either by a simple model or a better fit. The package of parsimony indices encompasses “Adjusted Goodness of Fit Index (AGFI)” and “Parsimony Normed Fit Index (PNFI)” (Hair et al., 2014).

Table 5.7: Cut-off Values of GOF Indices

Fit Indices		Acceptable Cut-off Values
Absolute Fit Indices	Chi-Square ( $\chi^2$ )	Non-significant models with $p > 0.05$ should not be rejected
	Normed Chi <sup>2</sup> ( $\chi^2/df$ )	Generally, $1 < \chi^2/df < 3$ indicates better fit. However, ratios $< 5$ signify a reasonable fit
	Root Mean Square Error of Approximation (RMSEA)	Lower values of RMSEA signify better fit and values ranging from 0.05 and 0.08 suggest a satisfactory fit
Incremental Fit Indices	Comparative Fit Index (CFI)	CFI $> 0.90$ indicates that the model fits well.
	Tucker-Lewis Index (TLI) or Non-Normed Fit Index (NNFI)	Models with TLI $> 0.90$ indicate adequate fit.

Source: Adapted from (Koufteros, Babbar, and Kaighobadi, 2009; Kline, 2011; Hair et al., 2014)

### Stage 5: Specifying the Structural Model

In this step, the relationships between constructs are assigned in accordance with the theorised model. It focuses on directing single-headed arrows to represent the hypothesised relationships in the model. Each relationship is represented by one hypothesis. The inclusion of measurement specification is essential in this stage as a requirement for structural model estimation (Hair et al., 2014). In doing so, it has become evident that both the structural and measurement aspects

are incorporated to represent one comprehensive model by the path diagram. In this way, the overall model and theory are ready to be estimated and tested (Hair et al., 2014).

### **Stage 6: Assessing the Structural Model Validity**

The final stage focuses on testing the validity of the entire structural model and the hypothesised relationships. It places a particular emphasis on the importance of achieving an acceptable fit for the measurement model before proceeding toward the structural model. Otherwise, it is unlikely for the model fit to be ameliorated after specifying the structural relationships (Hair et al., 2014). The validity of the structural model is assessed using the generic guidance and fit indices discussed in stage 4. A theoretical model is said to be valid when it accomplishes acceptable fit and “the parameter estimates are statistically significant and in the predicted direction” (i.e.,  $> 0$  for (+) relationships and  $< 0$  for (-) relationships) (Hair et al., 2014, p.589).

### **5.8. Measurement Reliability and Validity**

Reliability and validity are two fundamental aspects for assessing the quality of quantitative social sciences research (Saunders et al., 2016). Both criteria are closely overlapped because validity cannot be established without reliability (Neuman, 2012). Researchers must ensure the accuracy and consistency of indicators used to reflect the concept. Thus, reliability is attached with consistency, and validity is associated with accuracy (Hair et al., 2011). However, a high degree of reliability is not guaranteed. Accordingly, the former is necessary, but it is not a sufficient prerequisite for validity (Weathington et al., 2012). Both reliability and validity assessment procedures are discussed as follows:

### **5.8.1. Reliability Assessment**

Reliability is concerned with the degree to which a measurement does not fluctuate and provides consistent results across time when replicated (Ruane, 2016). It indicates whether the concept's measurement instrument is stable and consistent to evaluate the measure's goodness (Sekaran and Bougie, 2012). When the scale comprises multiple items and these items are strongly correlated, the reliability of the scale increases (Hair et al., 2011). To assess reliability, the present study will be using the "internal consistency approach" that evaluates summated scales, in which a set of items can be combined to generate a composite score for a construct (Hair et al., 2011; Saunders et al., 2016). To compute reliability, the widely known Cronbach's alpha test would be used. A rule of thumb states that "an alpha value of 0.7 or higher is taken as a good indication of reliability" (Ruane, 2016, p.129). However, alphas' values of 0.6-0.7 represent the minimum level of acceptability (Hair et al., 2014, p.90). Similarly, Kline (1999) alludes to the acceptance of alpha value  $> 0.6$  for psychological constructs due to their diversity. However, the major limitation with Cronbach's alpha test is that the reliability value increases when the number of the items increases in the scale. As a result, the researcher followed Hair et al.'s (2014) recommendation to place emphasis on more rigorous reliability measures, such as composite reliability (CR), based on the results of CFA. According to Koufteros (1999, p.848), CR refers to the consistency of a set of indicators in their latent construct. As a rule of thumb, CR with values greater than 0.7 demonstrates good reliability. However, CR's value that ranges from 0.6 to 0.7 may be acceptable, if "other indicators of model's construct validity are good" (Hair et al., 2017, p.619).

## **5.8.2. Validity Assessment**

Validity denotes “the extent to which a construct measures what is supposed to measure” (Hair et al., 2011, p.238). For measurement validity assessment, Hair et al. (2011, p.238) proposed using one or more of the three dominant validity approaches: “(1) content validity; (2) construct validity; and (3) and criterion validity”. The present study would address the first two approaches, as they were widely considered in the published empirical research.

### **5.8.2.1. Content Validity**

Content validity is also referred to as face validity. It is a systematic subjective assessment of whether the scale really taps into or gauges its intended concept (Hair et al., 2011). This method of validation is established by asking a small group of respondents or a panel of judges whether the scales’ items apparently are appropriate and reflect the theoretical concepts’ contents (Hair et al., 2011; Sekaran and Bougie, 2012; Bryman and Bell, 2015). The content/face validity for the present study’s constructs was established based on the panel’s comments and the small pilot study conducted (see the pretesting stage in section 5.4.1).

### **5.8.2.2. Construct Validity**

Construct validity “testifies to how well the results obtained from the use of the measure fit theories around which the test is designed” (Sekaran and Bougie, 2012, p.160). It is assessed via both convergent and discriminant validity.

Convergent validity contends with the extent to which the measure’s indicators of the same construct are positively converged/associated with the construct itself (Hair et al., 2011). The present study followed Hair et al.’s (2014, p.605) rules of thumb for establishing convergent validity, which stated that the construct’s standardized factor loadings should be greater or

equal to 0.5 and the reliability of the construct should be greater or equal to 0.7 to ensure the adequacy of convergence. Also, the average variance extracted (i.e., mean-variance in the items explained by a construct) is a stricter test that can be used to evaluate convergent validity. The cut-off value for the AVE to suggest sufficient convergence is 0.5 or greater (Hair et al., 2014).

Discriminant validity indicates the extent to which one construct is conceptually distinct from another one (Ghauri and Gronhaug, 2010). When discriminant validity is high, this truly reflects the construct's uniqueness and its strong ability to gauge some phenomena relative to other constructs (Hair et al., 2014). It is documented that discriminant validity is established if the construct's AVE square root is greater than the correlation between this construct and the remaining ones (Hair et al., 2014). This criterion would be used to evaluate the discriminant validity in the present study.

Eventually, the results of both convergent and discriminant validity would be reported in the next chapter 6.

## **Chapter Six: Data Analysis and Results**

### **6.1. Introduction**

This chapter endeavors to conduct and present the results of the statistical analysis using Stata 15 and Amos 25 for the purpose of testing the set of hypothesised relationships in the previous chapter. The structure of this chapter is composed of the following main six sections: (1) an overview of the collected total number responses; (2) data screening and preparation; (3) descriptive statistics of sample profile; (4) reliability, validity, and measurement model assessment; (5) common bias method test; and (6) structural equation model (SEM) and hypotheses testing.

### **6.2. An Overview of the Collected Responses**

This dataset is collected from both self-initiated and organisationally supported expatriates who are currently working in companies/organisations with foreign joint ventures operating in both the industrial and service sectors in Egypt. Admittedly, Egypt is one of the countries where primary data collection is extremely challenging due to the uncooperative respondents (Gould-Williams, Mostafa, and Bottomley, 2014). More importantly, more time was wasted in the bureaucratic procedures to get the security approval from the Egyptian local authorities, which is of utmost importance to get access to the foreign companies/organisations. In addition, it was really difficult to arrange formal appointments with the Egyptian HR managers to discuss the potential of my survey circulation. Despite the availability of the total number of expatriates working in Egypt as shown in the ministry of manpower and immigration previously displayed, there is no complete and reliable directory showing how many expatriates are in each of the foreign companies/organisations' subsidiaries in Egypt.

As a result of the previously summarized challenges, the adoption of both convenience and snowball sampling techniques was fairly appropriate, fitting in the unique features of the expatriate population that is difficult to be accessed in Egypt. For the purpose of data collection, I employed two methods: electronic (online) and paper and pencil (hard copy) questionnaires. The latter was implemented because some of the accessed companies refused to distribute questionnaires among expatriate staff via email in compliance with their internal policies. A total of 313 questionnaires were received by the researcher, subdivided as 249 e-versions and 64 hard copies. Nonetheless, the response rate could not be calculated because of the lack of information about the total number of expatriates in some of the accessed companies/organisations.

The electronic data were downloaded in an excel sheet. Then, the data collected via paper and pencil questionnaires were entered manually in the same excel sheet. To ensure the accuracy of the data entered manually, the hard copied were double-checked with the excel sheet two times. Then, the whole data became ready for preparation and screening.

### **6.3. Data Screening and Preparation**

Prior to starting the statistical analysis using SEM in Amos 25, scholars strongly recommended avoiding the ignorance of data screening (Kline, 2011), and examining the dataset to detect any potential problems, including missing data, outliers identification, and the evaluation of normality assumptions (Hair et al., 2014). This section focuses on missing data and normality assessment, whilst outliers' identification will be discussed later in section 6.5.3 of this chapter.



### **6.3.1. Missing Data**

Although researchers exert influential efforts in gathering data via questionnaires in many fields, they are less likely to avoid the problem of missing data because of the failure of some respondents to complete/fill in some items/questions (Roth et al., 1999). It has been proposed that missing data can be attributed to several reasons, such as participants' adverted rejection to answer the question, participants' lack of knowledge on how to answer the question, questions omitted mistakenly by participants (Saunders et al., 2016), and procedural errors (e.g., data collection and data entry errors) (Hair et al., 2014). Two key negative influences can result from missing data. Firstly, when missing data leads the researcher to delete some cases using the listwise deletion method, this will result in losing statistical power. Secondly, some estimates are likely to be biased (e.g., biased downward/upward of measures of dispersion, central tendency, and correlation coefficients).

Numerous common techniques have been suggested in the literature of missing data to handle this issue, comprising: (1) listwise deletion (i.e., the full exclusion for any case with missing data); (2) pairwise deletion (i.e., the exclusion of cases on statistical analysis bases); (3) hot-desk imputation (i.e., replacing the missed value with another one taken from a similar observation/case); (4) mean-substitution (i.e., a widely used technique in which missing data are substituted by taking the mean/average of the variable for all the participants); and (5) "regression imputation" (i.e., this technique entails carrying out regression analysis to examine the existing relationships, and then, predicting missing scores of this variable according to how it is related to other variables) (Roth et al., 1999; Tsikriktsis, 2005; Hair et al., 2014).

Per the present study, as mentioned earlier in this chapter, I collected 249 responses electronically via the online survey and 64 hard copies (paper and pencil). In the 249 e-versions,

there were no missing data at all in the main variables (Likert scale questions) because the respondents were not allowed to transfer from one question (section) to another until all the questions within each section are completely answered. However, in the last section (demographic variables), I found two cases just selected the “others” option, which required specifying which industry they belonged to. Because the industry was not one of the main variables in this study, I treated these two cases by categorising them as a separate group, named as “others” in the dataset. In addition, three cases were found to miss identifying their current assignment tenure correctly. In order not to lose any responses from this unique sample, the item-mean substitution technique was employed because it was easy to be used and helped to preserve data (Tsikriktsis, 2005). Hence, these 3 missed values were replaced by taking the average of current assignment tenure question/item of the entire respondents who have valid and complete answers.

Regarding the 64 hard copies, fortunately, no missing data were captured in the main variables’ questions. However, for only 6 cases in the demographic section, the respondents refused to declare their nationality as they just wrote it as “non-Egyptian” or “other Egyptian”. They might have their personal reasons for this act. As similarly done in the cases of industry, I treated these 6 cases in the nationality question as a separate group, categorising them in the dataset as “other nationalities”.

Further data preparation procedures were conducted in the dataset, involving reverse coding for 4-items of the job deprivation-autonomy scale, 2-items of the job deprivation-competence scale, 2-items of the job deprivation-relatedness scale, 2-items of the thriving scale, and only one item of the assignment renewal scale.

### **6.3.2. Normality Assessment**

Normality refers to what extent the variables under investigation follow the natural distribution. It is a very crucial assumption for multivariate techniques (Hair et al., 2014). If the assumption of normality is violated, this may influence the precision of the statistical tests (Weston et al., 2008). Normality can be tested using both univariate and multivariate techniques (Hair et al., 2014). However, multivariate normality is not simple to be tested and impractical because it requires examining numerous linear combinations (Weston et al., 2008; Hair et al., 2014). Thus, if univariate normality is achieved for all variables, this can be sufficient to assume multivariate normality (Hair et al., 2014).

Accordingly, univariate normality was screened and assessed using both “skewness and kurtosis” (Weston et al., 2008). Skewness denotes the asymmetrical shape of distribution towards the mean. Skewness can be either positive (i.e., scores fall below mean and shift to the left) or negative (i.e., scores are above mean and shift to the right) (Kline, 2011; Hair et al., 2014). On the other hand, kurtoses are indicators of the tails and peaks existing in the distribution (Weston et al., 2008). Similarly, kurtosis can be either positive (i.e., characterised by higher peaks and heavier tails, typically known as leptokurtic) or negative (i.e., characterised by flatness, named as platykurtic) (Kline, 2011; Hair et al., 2014). The rule of thumb considers univariate skewness values greater than 2 and univariate kurtoses greater than 7 as early departure from normality (Curran et al., 1996, p.22).

As shown in table 6.1, all the items in the present study had no extreme kurtoses and skewness values because all the items’ skewness and kurtoses were below 2 and 7, respectively. Accordingly, as univariate normality was evaluated and achieved, multivariate normality is more likely to be assumed. In addition, this indicates that using the maximum likelihood

estimation technique in SEM is not problematic, as this technique seriously considers multivariate normality assumptions.

Based on the previous procedures data screening/preparation and normality assessment, the data did not need any further treatments (e.g., transformation) and the dataset became ready for running descriptive statistics of the sample in the next section.

Table 6.1: Normality Assessment

Constructs	Items	Skewness	Kurtosis	Constructs	Items	Skewness	Kurtosis
Regulatory	Reg1	-0.36	2.08	Cross-Cultural Hope	Hope1	-0.54	2.65
	Reg2	-0.56	2.18		Hope2	-0.68	3.30
	Reg3	-0.35	1.96		Hope3	-0.78	3.73
	Reg4	-0.18	2.50		Hope4	-0.77	3.62
	Reg5	-0.01	2.37				
Normative	Nor1	-0.12	1.98	Cross-Cultural Efficacy	Eff1	-0.84	3.48
	Nor2	-0.21	2.27		Eff2	-0.78	3.43
	Nor3	-0.03	2.01		Eff3	-0.56	3.02
	Nor4	-0.40	2.01		Eff4	-0.65	3.33
	Nor5	-0.06	1.99				
Cultural Cognitive	Cog1	-0.45	2.27	Cross-Cultural Resilience	Res1	-0.72	3.54
	Cog2	-0.33	2.15		Res2	-0.85	3.55
	Cog3	-0.34	2.04		Res3	-0.54	2.96
	Cog4	0.04	2.09		Res4	-0.79	3.14
	Cog5	-0.35	2.15				
Deprivation Autonomy	rDepAut1	0.68	3.09	Cross-Cultural Optimism	Opt1	-0.65	3.00
	rDepAut2	0.62	2.78		Opt2	-0.83	3.19
	rDepAut3	0.41	2.40		Opt3	-0.33	2.57
	rDepAut4	0.60	2.76		Opt4	-0.66	3.23
	DepAut5	0.30	2.04				
Deprivation Competence	DepComp1	0.34	2.27	Knowledge Sharing Willingness	KShare1	-0.78	3.45
	rDepComp2	0.15	2.61		KShare2	-1.01	4.37
	rDepComp3	0.35	2.93		KShare3	-0.77	3.62
	DepComp4	0.15	2.26		KShare4	-0.82	3.64
	rDepComp5	0.15	2.19				
Deprivation Relatedness	DepRel1	0.16	2.11	Assignment	Ren1	-0.71	2.91
	DepRel2	0.21	2.03	Renewal	Ren2	-0.61	2.91
	DepRel3	0.27	2.10	Intention	rRen3	-0.30	2.11

	rDepRel4	0.22	2.56				
	rDepRel5	0.15	2.19				
Vitality	V1	-0.60	2.89	Adjustment	WorkAdj1	-0.34	2.54
	V2	-0.61	2.67		WorkAdj2	-0.83	3.48
	rV3	-0.51	2.47		WorkAdj3	-0.61	3.35
	V4	-0.43	2.61		InterAdj1	-0.56	2.91
	V5	-0.65	3.18		InterAdj2	-0.71	3.62
					InterAdj3	-0.55	2.95
					InterAdj4	-0.51	2.97
Learning	L1	-0.66	2.90	Performance	Task1	-0.69	3.63
	L2	-0.81	3.22		Task2	-0.73	3.64
	L3	0.58	3.17		Task3	-0.80	4.07
	rL4	-0.76	2.77		Context1	-0.76	3.62
	L5	-0.76	3.29		Context2	-0.66	3.62
					Context3	-0.57	3.41

#### 6.4. Descriptive Statistics of the Overall Sample Profile

This section displays the demographic characteristics of the questionnaire's respondents. As shown in table 6.1, the demographic profile included age, gender, marital status, family accompanied, nationality, type of expatriation, prior international work experience, prior specific work experience, job hierarchy, educational level, Arabic/Egyptian language proficiency, cross-cultural training before/after, and current assignment tenure. Both frequencies and percentages were employed to statistically depict the respondents' profiles.

Table 6.2: Demographic Profile of the Expatriate Respondents

Demographic Variable	Categories	Frequency (N)	Percentage (%)
Age	20-29	64	20.4
	30-39	131	41.9
	40-49	72	23
	50-60	39	12.5
	Over 60	7	2.2
Gender	Male	194	62

	Female	119	38
<b>Marital Status</b>	Single	100	31.9
	Married	213	68.1
<b>Expatriation Type</b>	Self-initiated	206	65.8
	Organizationally Supported	107	34.2
<b>Prior International Work Experience</b>	No	121	38.7
	Yes	192	61.3
<b>Prior Specific Work Experience in Egypt</b>	No	218	69.6
	Yes	95	30.4
<b>Job Level</b>	Clerical Staff	34	10.9
	Low-Level Management	85	27.5
	Middle-Level Management	159	50.8
	Top Level Management	34	10.9
<b>Education Level</b>	High school/diploma or below	27	8.6
	Primary Degree	127	40.5
	Master's Degree	135	43.1
	Doctorate Degree	24	7.7
<b>Arabic/Egyptian Language Proficiency</b>	None	57	18.2
	Basic	101	32.3
	Conversational	84	26.8
	Fluent	71	22.7
<b>Cross-Cultural Training Before/After</b>	No	139	44.4
	Yes	174	55.6
<b>Assignment Tenure</b>	Less than 1 year	54	17.3
	1 to less than 5 years	159	50.8
	5 to less than 10 years	70	22.4
	10 years or more	30	9.6

Table 6.2 Continued

Demographic Variable	Categories	Frequency (N)	Percentage (%)
<b>Industry</b>	1. Banking/Finance	23	7.3
	2. Manufacturing	55	17.6
	3. Oil	32	10.2
	4. Education <sup>70</sup>	108	34.5
	5. Hospitality	21	6.7
	6. Pharmaceutical	14	4.5
	7. International Development	7	2.2
	8. Logistics	2	0.6
	9. Insurance	1	0.3
	10. Construction and Engineering	6	1.9
	11. Health	3	1.0
	12. ICT	27	8.6
	13. Retail	1	0.3
	14. Sports Supply	2	0.6
	15. Transportation	9	2.9
	16. Others (PNTS)	2	0.6

Table 6.2 Continued

Demographic Variable	Categories	Frequency (N)	Percentage (%)	Categories	Frequency (N)	Percentage (%)
<b>Nationality</b>	1. American	41	13.1	29. Syrian	8	2.6
	2. British	43	13.7	30. Yemen	1	0.3
	3. Canadian	20	6.4	31. Afghanistan	4	1.3
	4. German	17	5.4	32. Algeria	6	1.9
	5. French	19	6.1	33. Sudan	4	1.3
	6. Indian	13	4.2	34. Morocco	3	1
	7. Chinese	23	7.3	35. Romanian	2	0.6
	8. Bangladesh	9	2.9	36. Turkish	7	2.2
	9. Russian	4	1.3	37. Bahrain	3	1

<sup>70</sup> Ren et al. (2015, p.76) stated that international assignments for expatriate teachers in the education sector is not “different in nature than that of an overseas assignment from a parent company”.

10. Irish	4	1.3	38. Japan	3	1
11. Filipinos	3	1	39. Tunisian	4	1.3
12. Italy	3	1	40. Iraq	2	0.6
13. Denmark	4	1.3	41. South Africa	1	0.3
14. Belgium	2	0.6	42. Portuguese	1	0.3
15. Argentina	4	1.3	43. Maltese	1	0.3
16. Dutch	1	0.3	44. Cuban	1	0.3
17. Albanian	1	0.3	45. Uganda	1	0.3
18. Swiss	2	0.6	46. Belarus	1	0.3
19. Greek	2	0.6	47. Azerbaijan	1	0.3
20. Nigerian	1	0.3	48. Ecuador	1	0.3
21. Zambian	1	0.3	49. Maldives	1	0.3
22. Australian	4	1.3	50. Bulgaria	1	0.3
23. Pakistani	2	0.6	51. Mexico	1	0.3
24. Austrian	3	1	52. El Salvador	1	0.3
25. Saudi	8	2.6	53. Hungary	1	0.3
26. Emirates	7	2.2	54. Sri-Lankan	1	0.3
27. Kuwait	2	0.6	55. Jordan	1	0.3
28. Qatar	2	0.6	56. Others (PNTS)	6	1.9

As displayed in table 6.1 above, the age of the majority of the respondents resided within the categories of 20-29, 30-39, and 40-49, representing 20.4%, 41.9%, and 23%, respectively, and the remaining respondents were above 50. As for the respondents' gender, the sample was dominated by males, representing 62%, while females accounted for 38%. Regarding marital status, 31.9% of the respondents were single and the rest (68.1%) were in a committed relationship/married. In relation to expatriation type, 65.8% (almost 2/3) of the sample was dominated by self-initiated expatriates, whereas organizationally supported ones represented 34.2%. With respect to prior international work experience, it was found that 61.3% of the respondents had prior international work experience, whilst the rest (38.7%) had no prior international work experience. For the prior specific work experience in Egypt (not including



the current one), it can be noticed that the majority (69.6%) of the respondents lacked this kind of experience, while the remaining (30.4%) had prior specific work experience in Egypt in the past.

The distribution of industries (i.e., sectors in which expatriate respondents work) largely varied. The largest cohort of expatriates was from the education sector (34.5%), followed by manufacturing (17.6%), oil (10.2%), ICT (8.6%), banking and finance (7.3%), hospitality (6.7%), pharmaceutical (4.5%), and transportation (2.9%). Some other minor industries were reported in table 6.1 as well. Nonetheless, two respondents (0.6%) just selected the “other” option without specifying their sectors, seeming they did not prefer to say/declare them. As for job level, four categories were captured in this sample, comprising clerical staff, low-level managers, middle-level managers, and top-level managers. Almost half of the respondents (50.8%) were middle-level managers and the remaining three cohorts (clerical staff, low level, and top-level managers) accounted for 10.9%, 27.5%, and 10.9%, respectively.

With respect to nationality, a wide variety of nationalities existed this variable, including expatriates coming from different continents (e.g., Americas, Europe, Asia, Africa, and the Middle East region). Remarkably, British, American, Chinese, Canadian, French, German, and Indian expatriates were the most frequent nationalities, accounting for 13.7%, 13.1%, 7.3%, 6.4%, 6.1%, 5.4%, and 4.2%, respectively. Other minor nationalities were reported as well. However, 6 respondents (1.9%) did not prefer to identify their nationalities and just mentioned their nationalities as “other Egyptian or non-Egyptian” in the hard copy questionnaire.

Per educational level, the two largest groups of the respondents, 43.1% and 40.5%, were holders of primary and master’s degrees, respectively. While only 8.6% had high school diplomas/below, and 7.7% held doctorate degrees. As for the level of Arabic/Egyptian

language proficiency, 18.2% of the expatriate respondents had no proficiency level, 32.3% had a basic level, 26.8% had a conversational level, and the rest (22.7%) were fluent. With respect to cross-cultural training before departure or after arrival, 44.45% of the expatriate respondents did not receive any training, whereas the remaining respondents (55.6%) received cross-cultural training. Finally, regarding current assignment tenure, the largest cohort of respondents (50.8%) has been working for a period ranged from 1 to less than 5 years, followed by 22.4% (5 to less than 10 years), 17.3% (less than 1 year), and 9.6% (10 years or more).

### **6.5. Reliability, Validity, and Measurement Model Assessment**

To conduct this preliminary step, confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) was used. CFA is a kind of SEM that specifically addresses the relationship between indicators/items and latent variables (measurement model). Generally speaking, each researcher has been suggested to pre-specify the entire model. Hence, based on both the theory of knowledge and previous empirical research, the researcher should have a priori knowledge of which set of observed indicators pertains to which factor (Brown, 2015). CFA has some common uses, involving verifying the pattern of association between items and their designated factors (i.e., factor loadings), supporting the multidimensionality of the latent variables (i.e., composed of multiple subscales), underpinning the generation of a composite score (total score of items) as well as a composite of subscales, estimating the constructs' reliability and providing a potential evidence of their validity (i.e., both convergent and discriminant validity), and investigating the pattern of association among several latent variables (Teo, Tsai, and Yang, 2013; Brown, 2015).

Post running CFA, the overall fit of the model must be assessed. Following Hair et al.'s (2014) rule of thumb, the model fit should be examined using one incremental fit index and one absolute fit index, along with chi-square results. Hence, the current study capitalised on the

comparative fit index (CFI), Tucker-Lewis index (TLI), and incremental fit index (IFI) to be the incremental indices, and root mean square error of approximation (RMSEA), in addition to normed chi-square ( $\chi^2/df$ ) to be the absolute fit indices. Besides carrying out the overall CFA, encompassing all the latent variables, an individual CFA was run to each construct independently/separately.

### **6.5.1. Results of CFA for Individual Constructs**

The results of CFA for each construct are dismantled in the following subsections

#### **6.5.1.1. Results of Second-Order CFA for ID**

According to Ramsey (2013), ID is a multifaceted construct, comprising the regulatory, normative, and cultural-Cognitive sub-dimensions. Therefore, second-order confirmatory factor analysis was conducted, in which all the individual items were specified to load on the three 1<sup>st</sup> order latent variables (regulatory, normative, and cultural cognitive). The three 1<sup>st</sup> order latent variables were specified to load onto the second-order latent variable, representing the higher-order construct of ID, with constraining the regulatory facet at 1 for model identification. The CFA results demonstrated that the three factors provided adequate fit for the data ( $\chi^2/df = 2.29$  at  $P < 0.001$ , CFI = 0.93, TLI = 0.92, IFI = 0.94, RMSEA = 0.06). All the items highly and significantly loaded on their 1<sup>st</sup> order latent constructs, except for the 5<sup>th</sup> item of the regulatory sub-dimension (loading = 0.49, falling below the cutoff value of 0.5 (Hair et al., 2014). Accordingly, it was dropped. Before rerunning CFA, Cronbach's alpha for the regulatory facet was re-examined, and the results showed that the alpha coefficient slightly increased from 0.7729 to 0.7738. Then, when second-order CFA was rerun, the model fit results slightly improved ( $\chi^2/df = 2.27$  at  $P < 0.001$ , CFI = 0.94, TLI = 0.93, IFI = 0.94, RMSEA

= 0.06). All the items' loadings on their 1<sup>st</sup> order latent variables exceeded the threshold of 0.5 at  $P < 0.001$ . Additionally, the loadings on the higher-order construct were 0.86, 1.02, and 0.92 at  $P < 0.001$  for regulatory, normative, and cultural facets, respectively.

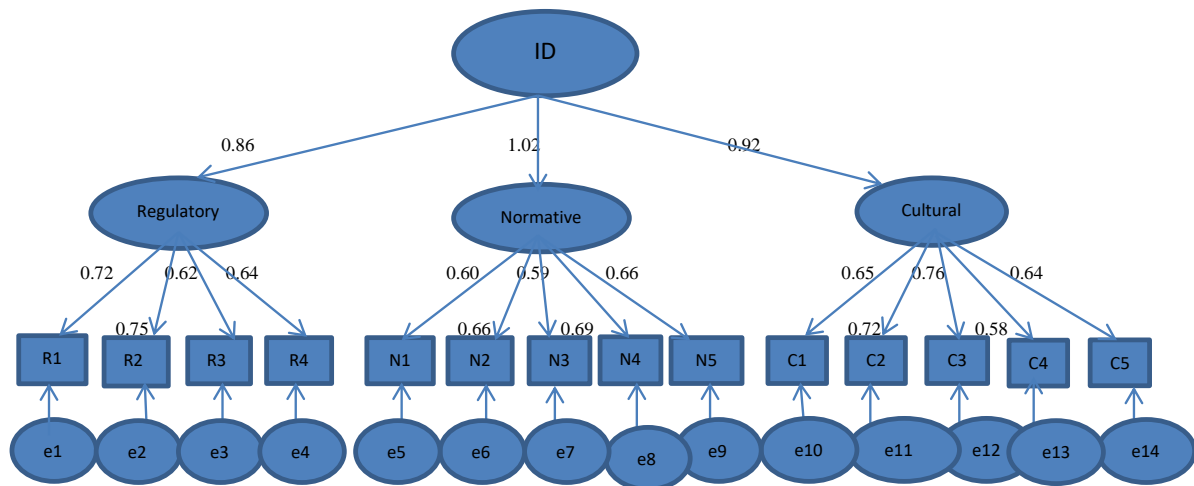


Figure 6.1: Results of Second-Order CFA for Institutional Distance Construct.

Table 6.3: Results of Second-Order CFA for Institutional Distance Construct

First Order Constructs	Items	Standardized Loadings	P-Value	Cronbach's Alpha ( $\alpha$ )	Composite Reliability (CR)
Regulatory	Reg1	0.72	Fixed	0.77	0.80
	Reg2	0.75	***		
	Reg3	0.62	***		
	Reg4	0.64	***		
Normative	Nor1	0.60	Fixed	0.76	0.80
	Nor2	0.66	***		
	Nor3	0.59	***		
	Nor4	0.69	***		

	Nor5	0.66	***		
Cultural-Cognitive	Cog1	0.65	Fixed	0.80	0.81
	Cog2	0.75	***		
	Cog3	0.76	***		
	Cog4	0.58	***		
	Cog5	0.64	***		
<b>Second-order Construct</b>	<b>1st Order</b>	<b>Standardized Loadings</b>	<b>P-Value</b>	<b>Cronbach's Alpha</b>	<b>Composite Reliability</b>
Institutional Distance (ID)	Regulatory	0.86	Fixed	0.90	0.92
	Normative	1.02	***		
	Cultural	0.92	***		
$\chi^2/df = 2.27$ at $P < 0.001$ , CFI = 0.94, TLI = 0.93, IFI = 0.94, RMSEA = 0.06					

The previous second-order CFA was compared to an alternative model, in which all the 14 items were specified to load onto a single latent variable. The results of single-factor CFA revealed a less good model fit ( $\chi^2/df = 2.91$  at  $P < 0.001$ , CFI = 0.91, TLI = 0.89, IFI = 0.91, RMSEA = 0.07). This indicated that the second-order model was significantly better than the single-factor model. Additionally, it can be remarked from the table above that the standardized factor loading for the normative facet on the higher-order institutional distance was 1.02. Jorsekog (1999) highlighted that when standardized factor loadings override the value of 1 “(e.g., 1.04, 1.44, or even 2.80)”, there is nothing necessarily to be wrong. Also, Degan (1978, p.873) stated that “standardized regression coefficients greater than one can legitimately occur.” This indicates the existence of a strong association between 1<sup>st</sup> order and second-order constructs (Li et al., 2005). In addition, this statistically significant strong relationship between the 1<sup>st</sup> order constructs and their higher-order one ratifies the convergent validity of the latter (Koufteros et al., 2009). The convergent validity and internal consistency were further

supported by the composite reliability score and alpha coefficient values, which were 0.92 and 0.90, respectively (i.e., above cutoff value of 0.7). Hair et al.'s (2014) rule of thumb pointed out that the convergent validity is assumed to be adequate when the items significantly converge with the latent construct with a loading value of 0.5 or higher and the CR is 0.7 or higher. Also, the three sub-dimensions demonstrated acceptable internal consistency, as the alpha coefficients were above 0.7. Thus, the overall ID construct was generated in the dataset by consolidating the three subscales.

### 6.5.1.2. Results of CFA for Job Deprivation-Autonomy

The construct of job deprivation-autonomy was measured using 5 items. One item was dropped to improve the alpha coefficient, resulting in four reflective items. The results of CFA are summarised in the following table:

Table 6.4: Results of CFA for Job Deprivation-Autonomy

Construct	Items	Standardized Loadings	P-Value	Cronbach's Alpha ( $\alpha$ )	Composite Reliability (CR)
Job Deprivation-Autonomy	rDepAut1	0.53	Fixed	0.72	0.77
	rDepAut2	0.65	***		
	rDepAut3	0.57	***		
	rDepAut4	0.75	***		
<b>The model is perfectly fitted and saturated</b>					

The standardized factor loadings of the individual items ranged from 0.53 to 0.75 at  $P < 0.001$ .

The construct's internal consistency exceeded the required cutoff value of 0.7 for both the composite reliability and alpha coefficient. Hence, as the  $CR > 0.7$  and no item loadings  $< 0.5$ , this indicated the adequacy of the construct's convergent validity. Then, the construct of job

deprivation-autonomy was created by aggregating and averaging the 4-items. The CFA model is presented in the following figure:

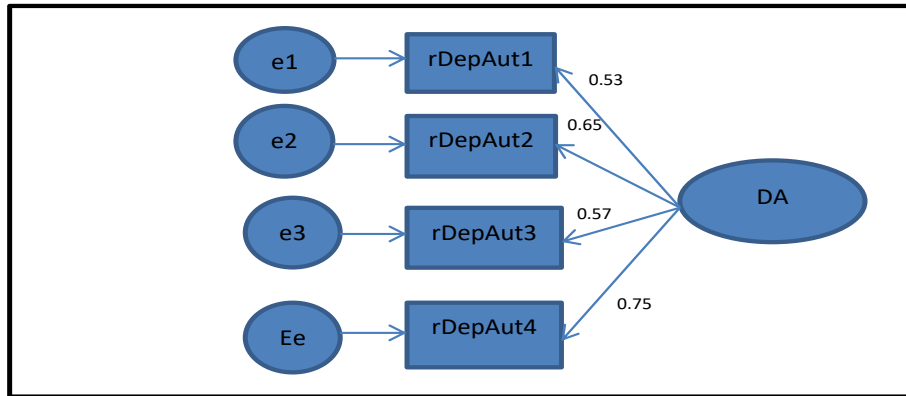


Figure 6.2: CFA Model for Deprivation Autonomy.

### 6.5.1.3. Results of CFA for Job Deprivation-Competence

The concept of job deprivation-competence was measured using 5-items. Two items were dropped to ameliorate the alpha's coefficient, resulting in 3 reflective items. The results of CFA are summarised in the following table:

Table 6.5: Results of CFA for Job Deprivation-Competence

Construct	Items	Standardized Loadings	P-Value	Cronbach's Alpha ( $\alpha$ )	Composite Reliability (CR)
Job Deprivation-Competence	rDepComp2	0.67	Fixed	0.73	0.74
	rDepComp3	0.74	***		
	rDepComp5	0.66	***		
<b>The model is perfectly fitted and saturated</b>					

As evident in table 6.5 above, the 3-items demonstrated acceptable statistically significant factor loadings ( $P < 0.001$ ), ranging from 0.66 to 0.67. Additionally, the construct displayed an acceptable level of internal consistency ( $\alpha$  and CR were above 0.7). As factor loadings and CR transcended their cutoff values of 0.5 and 0.7, respectively. Then, the construct had adequate convergent validity. The 3-items were aggregated and averaged to generate the composite of deprivation-competence. The CFA is illustrated in the following figure:

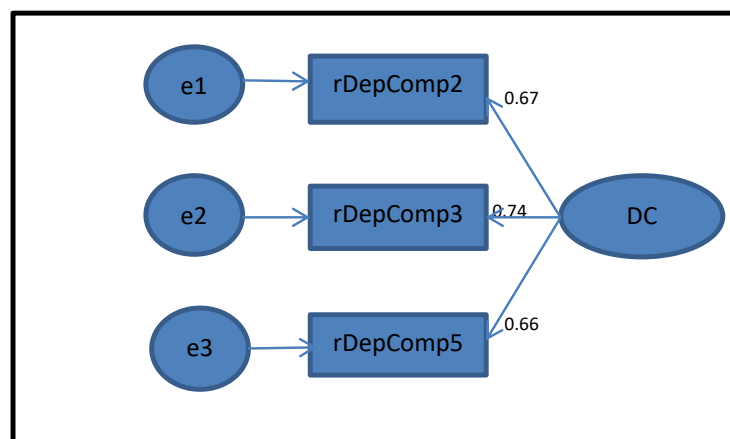


Figure 6.3: CFA Model for Deprivation Competence.

#### 6.5.1.4. Results of CFA for Job Deprivation-Relatedness

The construct of job deprivation-relatedness was measured using 5-items. Two items were omitted to improve the alpha's coefficient, ending up with 3 reflective items. The results of CFA are summarised in the following table:



Table 6.6: Results of CFA for Job Deprivation-Relatedness

Construct	Items	Standardized Loadings	P-Value	Cronbach's Alpha ( $\alpha$ )	Composite Reliability (CR)
Job Deprivation-Relatedness	DepRel1	0.62	Fixed	0.73	0.73
	DepRel2	0.70	***		
	DepRel3	0.73	***		
<b>The model is perfectly fitted and saturated</b>					

As shown in Table 6.6 above, the 3 individual indicators exhibited acceptable statistically significant factor loadings, ranging from 0.62 to 0.73. Moreover, the construct demonstrated an acceptable level of internal consistency, as the alpha's coefficient and CR were above the threshold of 0.7. The standardized loadings and CR surpassed their cutoff values of 0.5 and 0.7, respectively, thereby supporting the adequacy of the construct's convergent validity. The 3-items were aggregated and averaged to create the composite of deprivation-relatedness. The CFA model is depicted below:

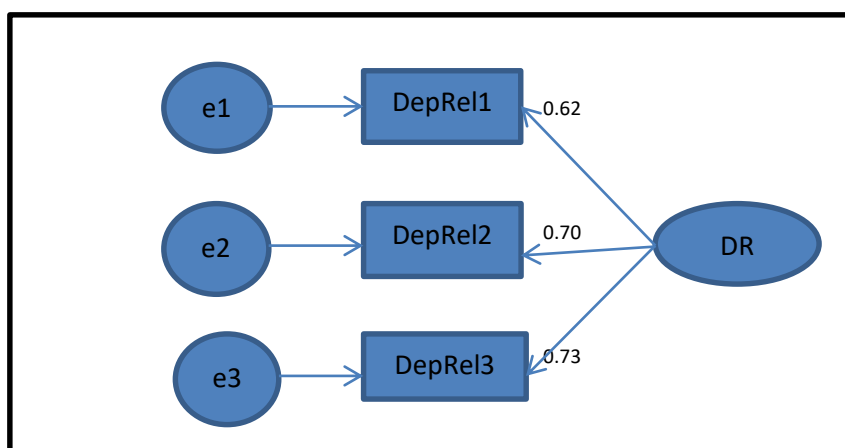


Figure 6.4: CFA Model for Deprivation Relatedness.

### **6.5.1.5. Results of Second-Order CFA for Thriving at Workplace**

The construct of thriving was measured using 10-items, bifurcated as 5-items to capture the vitality component and 5-items to reflect the learning component. One item was dropped from the former subscale and one item from the latter as well, to improve the alpha's coefficient, resulting in measuring the entire construct by 8-items (i.e., 4-items per subscale). According to Porath et al. (2011), thriving is a multidimensional construct, encompassing the vitality and learning sub-dimensions. Therefore, second-order CFA was conducted, in which all the individual items were specified to load onto the two 1<sup>st</sup> order latent variables (vitality and learning). Afterwards, the two 1<sup>st</sup> order latent variables were specified to load onto their second-order latent variable to represent the higher-order construct of thriving. Consistent with Porath et al. (2011), as the model had only two 1<sup>st</sup> order latent factors, the model was difficult to be identified (i.e., there should be at least three 1<sup>st</sup> order factors for model identification). Thus, I fixed the regression weights of the two 1<sup>st</sup> order factors at 1 to be equal. The CFA results supported that the two factors provided adequate fit for the data ( $\chi^2/df = 3.16$  at  $P < 0.001$ , CFI = 0.96, TLI = 0.94, IFI = 0.96, RMSEA = 0.083). However, the RMSEA was slightly above the cutoff value. Therefore, the post hoc modification indices were screened to further improve the initial model. Two large values of 26.56 and 14.28 were captured. Both values were associated with the covariance between e2 <-> e7 and e4 <-> e7. The two error terms were allowed to be correlated and CFA was conducted again. The results showed that the model fit has improved ( $\chi^2/df = 1.17$  at  $P > 0.05$ , CFI = 0.997, TLI = 0.995, IFI = 0.997, RMSEA = 0.024), suggesting a good fit for the data.

Table 6.7: Results of Second-Order CFA for Thriving Construct

First Order Constructs	Items	Standardized Loadings	P-Value	Cronbach's Alpha ( $\alpha$ )	Composite Reliability (CR)
Vitality	V1	0.78	Fixed	0.80	0.80
	V2	0.81	***		
	V3	0.61	***		
	V5	0.64	***		
Learning	L1	0.76	Fixed	0.82	0.82
	L2	0.78	***		
	L3	0.73	***		
	L5	0.63	***		
Second-order Construct	1st Order	Standardized Loadings	P-Value	Cronbach's Alpha	Composite Reliability
Thriving	Vitality	0.94	Fixed	0.90	0.92
	Learning	0.95	Fixed		
$\chi^2/df = 1.17$ at $P > 0.05$ , CFI = 0.99, TLI = 0.99, IFI = 0.949, RMSEA = 0.02					

As can be noticed from the above table 6.7, all the items' loadings on their first order latent variable were above 0.5 at  $P < 0.001$ , ranging from 0.61 to 0.81. Furthermore, the standardized loadings of the 1<sup>st</sup> order constructs on their second-order latent variable were 0.94 and 0.95 for vitality and learning, respectively. The previous second-order CFA was compared to an alternative single-factor model, in which all the 8-items were allowed to load onto one latent factor. The previous goodness of fit indices for the two-factor model were better than the single factor model's fit ( $\chi^2/df = 4.2$  at  $P > 0.001$ , CFI = 0.94, TLI = 0.92, IFI = 0.94, RMSEA = 0.10), with chi-square difference ( $\chi^2$  difference = 64.15,  $df = 3$ ,  $P < 0.001$ ). Ultimately, the construct of thriving displayed adequate reliability ( $\alpha > 0.7$ ) and convergent validity because

CR > 0.7 and the standardized factor loadings > 0.5. Accordingly, to create the composite of overall thriving, the two subscales were consolidated and averaged. The CFA model is presented in the following figure:

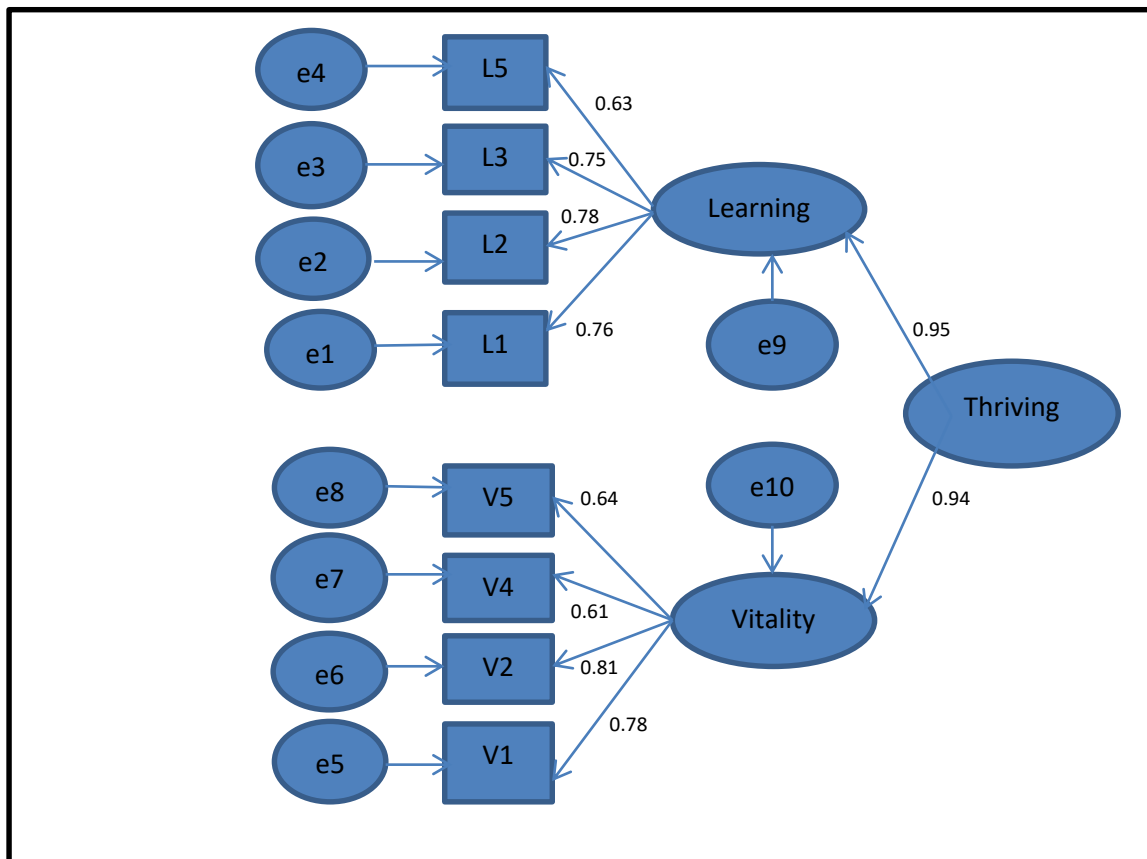


Figure 6.5: Second-Order CFA Model for Thriving at Workplace.

### 6.5.1.6. Results of Second-Order CFA for Cross-Cultural PsyCap

Sixteen items were used to measure the multidimensional concept of CC-PsyCap, encompassing: cross-cultural hope (4-items), cross-cultural efficacy (4-items), cross-cultural resilience (4-items), and cross-cultural optimism (4-items). Due to the multifaceted nature of this construct (Luthans et al., 2007; Clapp-Smith, 2009), second-order CFA was carried out, in

which all the individual indicators were allowed to load onto their intended 1<sup>st</sup> order latent variables. The 1<sup>st</sup> four order factors were allowed to load onto their second-order latent factor, representing the higher-order construct of CC-PsyCap. The results outlined some acceptable goodness of fit statistics (CFI = 0.91 and IFI = 0.91). However,  $\chi^2/df = 3.1$  at  $P < 0.001$ , TLI = 0.89, and RMSEA = 0.082. Accordingly, modification indices were diagnosed to provide additional improvement for this initial model. Three large values of 29.97, 21.16, and 20.51 were found to be associated with the covariance between e2 <-> e6, e12 <-> e16, and e6 <-> e10, respectively. These three error terms were allowed for correlation and CFA was run again. The results bolstered the four factors model, in which the model fit has improved ( $\chi^2/df = 2.48$  at  $P < 0.001$ , CFI = 0.94, TLI = 0.93, IFI = 0.94, RMSEA = 0.06), proposing adequate fit for the data.

Table 6.8: Results of Second-Order CFA for Cross-Cultural PsyCap Construct

First Order Constructs	Items	Standardized Loadings	P-Value	Cronbach's Alpha ( $\alpha$ )	Composite Reliability (CR)
Cross-Cultural Hope	Hope1	0.67	Fixed	0.76	0.85
	Hope2	0.78	***		
	Hope3	0.75	***		
	Hope4	0.78	***		
Cross-Cultural Efficacy	Eff1	0.75	Fixed	0.80	0.83
	Eff2	0.68	***		
	Eff3	0.71	***		
	Eff4	0.79	***		
Cross-Cultural Resilience	Res1	0.76	Fixed	0.79	0.84
	Res2	0.67	***		
	Res3	0.74	***		

	Res4	0.78	***		
Cross-Cultural Optimism	Opt1	0.73	Fixed	0.74	0.77
	Opt2	0.70	***		
	Opt3	0.60	***		
	Opt4	0.73	***		
<b>Second-order Construct</b>	<b>1st Order</b>	<b>Standardized Loadings</b>	<b>P-Value</b>	<b>Cronbach's Alpha</b>	<b>Composite Reliability</b>
Cross-Cultural PsyCap	Hope	0.96	Fixed	0.93	0.99
	Efficacy	0.98	***		
	Resilience	0.99	***		
	Optimism	1.00	***		
$\chi^2/df = 2.48$ at $P < 0.001$ , CFI = 0.94, TLI = 0.93, IFI = 0.94, RMSEA = 0.06					

All the loadings of the indicators statistically ( $P < 0.001$ ) converged with their designated 1<sup>st</sup> order latent variables, and the loadings ranged from 0.60 to 0.79. In addition, the 1<sup>st</sup> order constructs highly and significantly loaded onto their higher-order construct, with values of 0.96, 0.98, 0.99, and 1 for “hope, efficacy, resilience, and optimism”, respectively. The single latent alternative was examined, in which all the 16-items were allowed to load onto a single latent variable. The results of second-order CFA were significantly better than the single latent, as the latter’s fit indices were less preferable/acceptable ( $\chi^2/df = 2.87$  at  $P < 0.001$ , CFI = 0.92, TLI = 0.90, IFI = 0.92, RMSEA = 0.07), with a chi-square difference ( $\chi^2$  difference = 55.17,  $df = 6$ ,  $P < 0.001$ ).

Moreover, the construct also demonstrated adequate convergent validity because CR was greater than 0.70, and the standardized loadings were above 0.5. Also, the scale had high internal consistency, as the overall alpha was 0.93. Accordingly, the overall CC-PsyCap was

created in the dataset by consolidating and averaging the four subscales. The second-order CFA for cultural psychological capital is portrayed below:

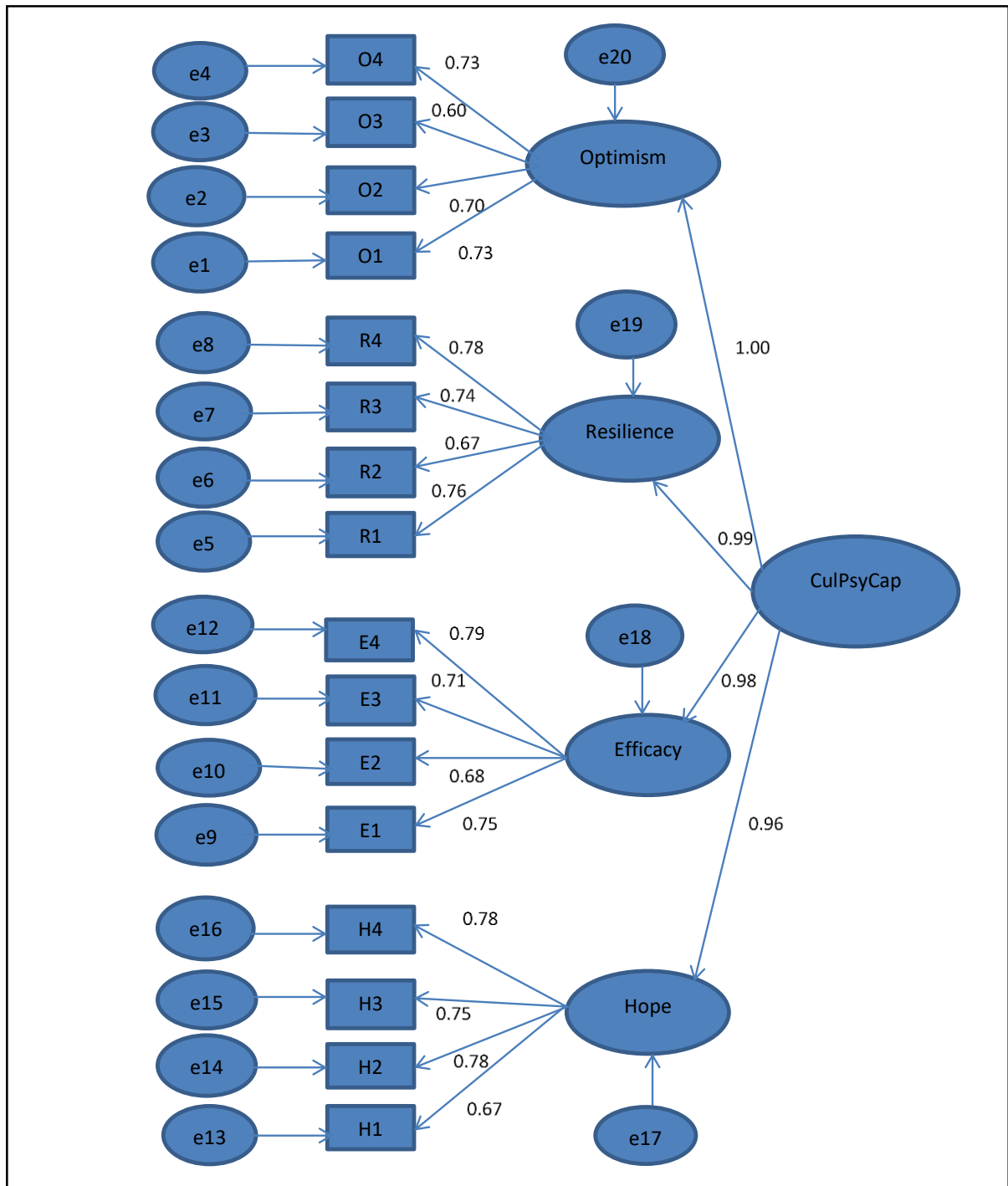


Figure 6.6: Second-Order CFA Model for Cross-cultural PsyCap

### 6.5.1.7. Results of CFA for Knowledge Sharing Intention

The construct of knowledge sharing intention was measured using 4-items that demonstrated statistically significant loadings, ranging from 0.67 to 0.82 at  $P < 0.001$ . The results of CFA are summarised in the following table:

Table 6.9: Results of CFA for Knowledge Sharing Intention Construct

Constructs	Items	Standardized Loadings	P-Value	Cronbach's Alpha ( $\alpha$ )	Composite Reliability (CR)
Knowledge Sharing Intention	KShare1	0.77	Fixed	0.85	0.86
	KShare2	0.82	***		
	KShare3	0.67	***		
	KShare4	0.79	***		
<b>The model is perfectly fitted and saturated</b>					

It can be vividly seen in table 6.9 that the construct exhibited high internal consistency because both the alpha's coefficient and CR met the cutoff value of 0.7. Additionally, the four indicators' loadings were above 0.5 and CR was greater than 0.7, thereby establishing adequate convergent validity. Hence, the 4-items were aggregated and averaged to create this variable in the dataset. The CFA is shown below:



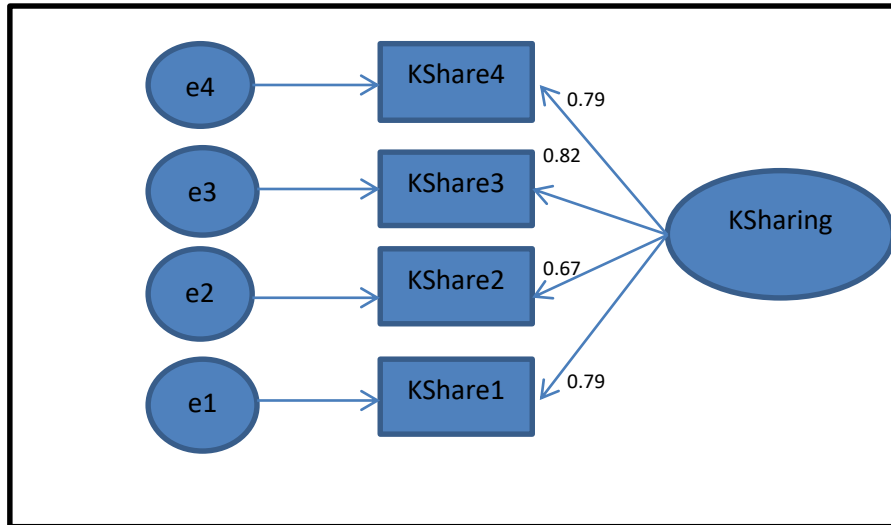


Figure 6.7: CFA Model for Knowledge Sharing Intention.

#### 6.5.1.8. Results of CFA for Assignment Renewal Intention

The construct was measured using 3-items. One item was dropped to improve the reliability of the scale, resulting in 2 reflective indicators. For model identification, the regression weights of both indicators were fixed at a value of 1. The results of CFA are tabulated below:

Table 6.10: Results of CFA for Knowledge Sharing Intention Construct

Constructs		Items	Standardized Loadings	P-Value	Cronbach's Alpha ( $\alpha$ )	Composite Reliability (CR)
Assignment Renewal Intention	Renewal	Renewal 1	0.82	Fixed	0.83	0.85
		Renewal 2	0.86	Fixed		
<b>The model is perfectly fitted and saturated</b>						

As noticed from the above table, the two items scale exhibited high factor loadings, as the values were 0.82 and 0.86, exceeding the threshold value of 0.5. Additionally, they demonstrated high internal consistency, as the alpha's coefficient was greater than 0.7. Also, the CR was over 0.7, thereby proposing the adequacy of the construct's convergent validity. Therefore, the composite score for this construct was generated in the dataset by summing and averaging the scores of both items. The CFA model is depicted below:

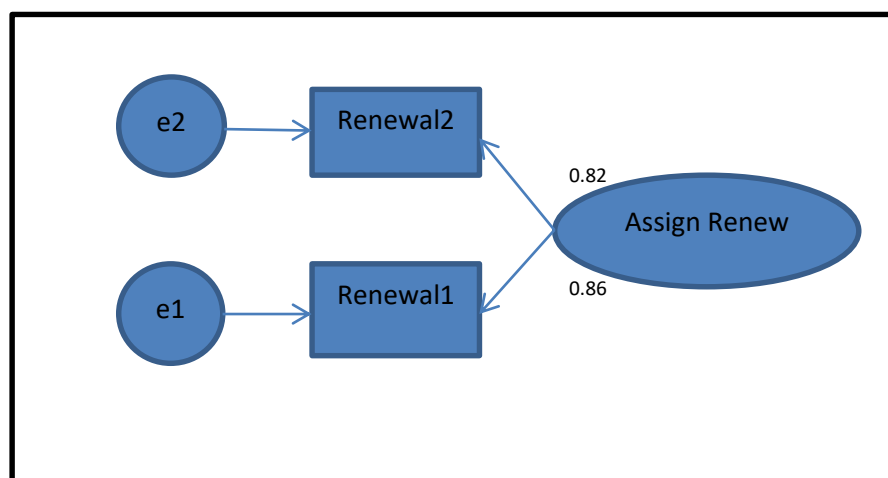


Figure 6.8: CFA Model for Assignment Renewal Intention.

#### 6.5.1.9. Results of CFA for Expatriate Adjustment

As previously mentioned, expatriate adjustment is a multi-faceted construct, encompassing the three sub-dimensions: work, interaction, and general adjustment (Black and Stephens, 1989). The present study's focus is only on two sub-dimensions, namely work and interaction facets because they are more predictive of myriad work-related outcomes, relative to general adjustment that concentrates on general life conditions outside the workplace. Both sub-dimensions were measured using 7-items, subdivided as 3-items for work facet and 4-items for

interaction one. The examination of the construct’s dimensionality was not of main interest in the present study. Therefore, it examined adjustment as a single construct as some previous studies did (see Zlobina et al., 2006; Kraimer and Wayne, 2004; Kim et al., 2016; Haldori et al., 2021). Consistent with prior scholars (Kraimer and Wayne, 2004), I checked the feasibility of combining the two sub-dimensions to create a single overall adjustment construct. As a consequence, a second-order CFA was conducted, in which the 7 individual indicators were specified to load onto the two 1<sup>st</sup> order latent variables, and then, the latter was allowed to load onto the higher-order construct of adjustment.

For model identification, the regression weights of the two 1<sup>st</sup> order latent variables were fixed at 1. The results of the second-order CFA bolstered the two-factor model, with acceptable fit indices ( $\chi^2/df = 2.86$  at  $P < 0.001$ , CFI = 0.96, TLI = 0.94, IFI = 0.96, RMSEA = 0.07). All the loadings of the individual items on the 1<sup>st</sup> order exceeded the cutoff values of 0.5, with statistically ( $P < 0.001$ ) significant values ranged from 0.54 to 0.69. Additionally, the standardized loading of the 1<sup>st</sup> order latent variables on their higher-order construct were 1.07 and 0.90 for work and interaction adjustment, respectively.

Table 6.11: Results of Second-Order CFA for Expatriate Adjustment Construct

First Order Constructs	Items	Standardized Loadings	P-Value	Cronbach’s Alpha ( $\alpha$ )	Composite Reliability (CR)
Work Adjustment	WorkAdj1	0.54	Fixed	0.66	0.67
	WorkAdj2	0.67	***		
	WorkAdj3	0.69	***		
Interaction Adjustment	IntAdj1	0.63	Fixed		
	IntAdj2	0.67	***		

	IntAdj3	0.69	***	0.74	0.74
	IntAdj5	0.60	***		
<b>Second-order Construct</b>	<b>1st Order</b>	<b>Standardized</b>	<b>P-Value</b>	<b>Cronbach's Alpha</b>	<b>Composite</b>
		<b>Loadings</b>			<b>Reliability</b>
Overall Adjustment	Work	1.07	Fixed		
	Interaction	0.90	Fixed	0.80	0.98
( $\chi^2/df = 2.86$ at $P < 0.001$ , CFI = 0.96, TLI = 0.94, IFI = 0.96, RMSEA = 0.07)					

Although the reliability of work adjustment was slightly below the threshold of 0.7, it was deemed satisfactory (Nunnally, 1978; Hair et al., 2014). However, the higher-order construct displayed high internal consistency and adequate convergent validity, as both CR and alpha coefficients exceeded the rule of thumb ( $> 0.7$ ). Since the two 1<sup>st</sup> order constructs were highly loaded on their higher-order construct, the overall expatriate adjustment was generated by integrating and averaging the two subscales. The two-factor model was compared to the single-factor one. The results of fit indices remained almost the same ( $\chi^2/df = 2.72$  at  $P < 0.001$ , CFI = 0.96, TLI = 0.94, IFI = 0.96, RMSEA = 0.07), with a chi-square difference ( $\chi^2$  difference = 0.85,  $df = 1$ ,  $P < 0.001$ ). The second-order CFA is adopted and depicted below:

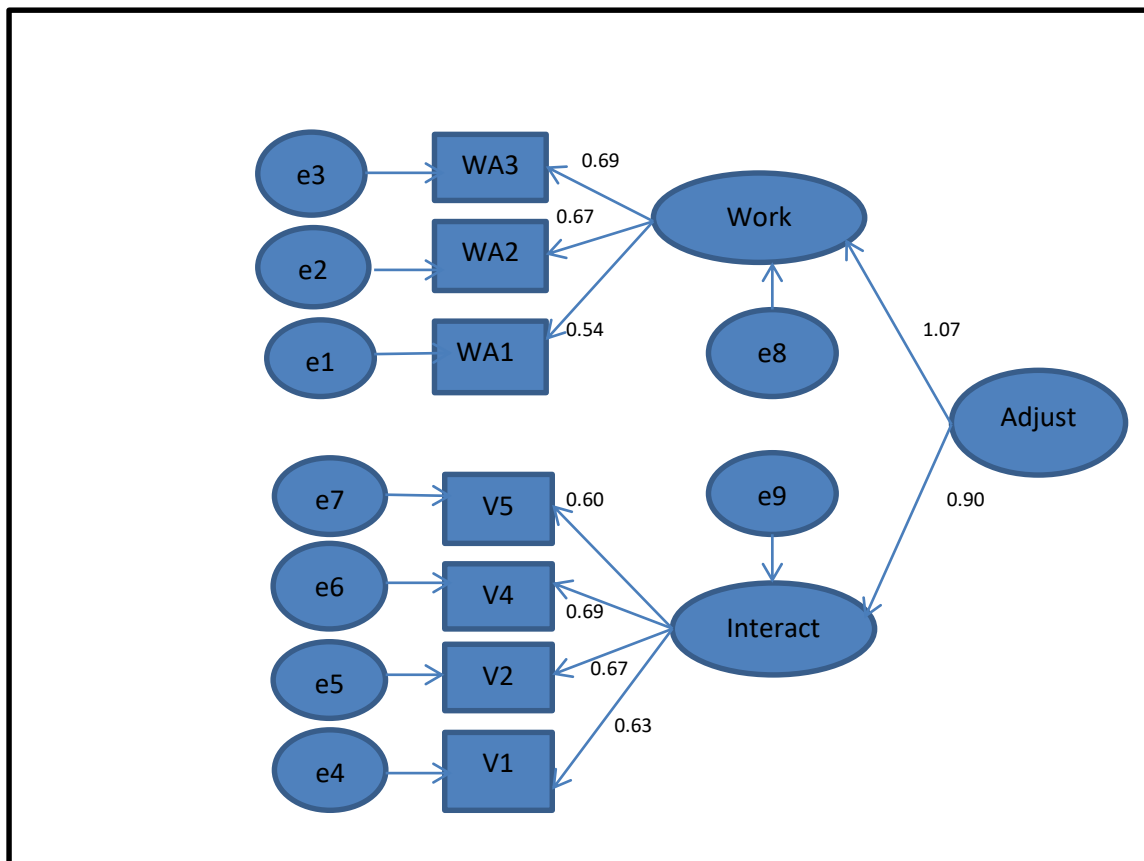


Figure 6.9: Second-Order CFA Model for Expatriate Adjustment.

### 6.5.1.10. Results of CFA for Expatriate Performance

Performance was measured using 6-items, bifurcated into two subscales: task performance (3-items) and contextual performance (3-items). Consistent with Caligiuri et al.'s (2016) research, I examined the potential of combining both subscales to create an overall single construct of performance, as the current study's interest was to examine how expatriates overall perform on their international assignments, regardless of the dimensionality. In doing so, second-order CFA was carried out to examine whether the two sub-dimensions might represent and capture the overall performance construct. The individual items were firstly allowed to load onto their

intended two 1<sup>st</sup> order latent variables. Then, the latter was specified to load onto the higher-order construct of overall performance, along with constraining their regression weights at the value of 1 for better model identification. The results supported the two-factor model with acceptable fit for the majority of the indices, except for RMSEA ( $\chi^2/df=4.96$  at  $P < 0.001$ , CFI = 0.96, TLI = 0.93, IFI = 0.96, RMSEA = 0.11).

Accordingly, modification indices were investigated to increase the potential for model fit improvement. Two large values of 8.51 and 8.02 were found to be associated with the error terms  $e_2 \leftrightarrow e_4$  and  $e_1 \leftrightarrow e_4$ , respectively. The model fit indices slightly improved ( $\chi^2/df = 3.70$  at  $P < 0.001$ , CFI = 0.98, TLI = 0.95, IFI = 0.98, RMSEA = 0.09). The modification indices were checked again as an attempt to improve RMSEA. Then, only one value did exit, which entailed correlating  $e_3 \leftrightarrow e_5$ . Afterwards, CFA was run again, and the results showed that RMSEA = 0.084 that might need minor improvement. Thus, again, modification indices were examined, suggesting the error term  $e_3 \leftrightarrow e_4$  to be correlated. The final model results exhibited good fit for the data ( $\chi^2/df = 1.25$  at  $P > 0.05$ , CFI = 0.99, TLI = 0.99, IFI = 0.99, RMSEA = 0.03). The final results are tabulated below:

Table 6.12: Results of Second-Order CFA for Expatriate Performance

First Order Constructs	Items	Standardized Loadings	P-Value	Cronbach's Alpha ( $\alpha$ )	Composite Reliability (CR)
Task Performance	Task1	0.81	Fixed	0.80	0.81
	Task2	0.76	***		
	Task3	0.70	***		
Contextual Performance	Context1	0.72	Fixed	0.75	0.74
	Context2	0.70	***		
	Context3	0.69	***		

Second-order Construct	1st Order	Standardized Loadings	P-Value	Cronbach's Alpha	Composite Reliability
Overall Performance	Task	0.99	Fixed	0.90	0.92
	Contextual	1.09	Fixed		
$\chi^2/df = 1.25$ at $P > 0.05$ , CFI = 0.99, TLI = 0.99, IFI = 0.99, RMSEA = 0.03					

It should be noted that the alternative single model was also tested, in which the 6-items were allowed to load onto one single factor, taking into consideration all the modification indices procedures mentioned above (i.e., correlating the same error terms), and the results of the latest second-order model were slightly better than the single-factor model, as the latter's fit indices were ( $\chi^2/df = 1.74$  at  $P > 0.05$ , CFI = 0.99, TLI = 0.99, IFI = 0.99, RMSEA = 0.05), with a chi-square difference ( $\chi^2$  difference = 3,  $df = 1$ ,  $P > 0.05$ ).

Finally, as obvious in table 6.12 above, the entire individual indicators have statistically and significantly loaded on their designated 1st order latent constructs, with values ranging from 0.69 to 0.81. Moreover, the loadings of the 1st order constructs on their high-order construct of overall performance were 1.09 and 1.09 for contextual and task performance, respectively. The construct also had high internal consistency, as the CR and alpha coefficients were above the cutoff value of 0.7. Based on the previous findings, convergent validity was adequately assumed. Hence, the two subscales were consolidated to create the overall construct of expatriate overall performance. The second-order CFA is adopted and depicted below:

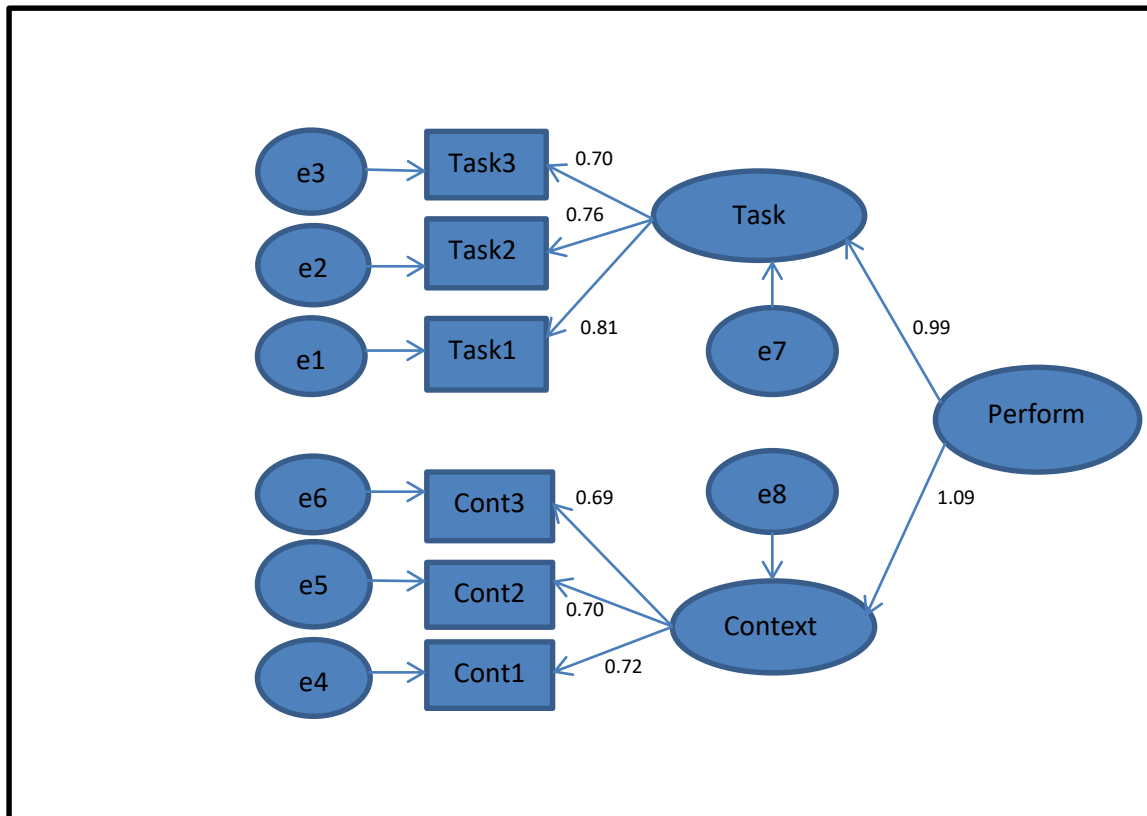


Figure 6.10: Second-Order CFA Model for Expatriate Performance

### 6.5.2. Item Parceling and the CFA Results for the Overall Measurement Model

The previous sub-section highlighted how the individual indicators converged with their designated individual constructs and demonstrated the dimensionality of the five higher-order constructs. Although the previous results of CFA for the individual constructs provided acceptable goodness of fit indices and paved the way for establishing the overall CFA, the good or acceptable fit may not be guaranteed when all the 10 latent constructs are incorporated together into the overall CFA, with this complex model that includes a large number of individual indicators, and with the current not relatively large sample size. Given the fact that



social and OB scholars encounter difficulty in getting access to large samples, the feasible suggested remedy to tackle this issue is to embrace the “Item Parceling Technique” (Recha and Chelladurai, 2012). Bagozzi and Edwards (1998) suggested that when the issues of sample size and model complexity do exist, researchers can minimize the number of estimated parameters by creating composites (i.e., parcels) of items and using them as indicators of the constructs rather than the individual items. The statistical procedure of item parceling<sup>71</sup> is discussed in more detail in the following sub-section:

### **6.5.2.1. Item Parceling Technique**

As a common procedure, Bandalos (2002, p.78) defined parceling as “summing and averaging item scores from two or more items and use their parcel scores in place of the item scores in an SEM analysis.” The notion of creating parcels is not novel because it was originally traced back to Cattell in 1956 (Hall et al., 1999; Marsh et al., 2013). Proponents of this statistical procedure alluded to several advantages of using it. First, it helps to handle the issue of the “subject-parameter” ratio because when parcels are employed, the number of estimated parameters decreases, especially when the sample size is not relatively large. In complex structural models, accompanied by small samples, researchers can use composites (aggregation of items) as indicators. Second, parcels are effective in solving non-normality data issues because they help closely approaching normal distribution. Third, unlike large individual items (indicators), few parcels per variable ameliorate the model fit, make the model more parsimony and easy to be interpreted, minimise the opportunities for residuals’ correlation, and reduce

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<sup>71</sup> The practice of item parcelling is commonly used in management studies (see Cole, Bedeian, and Bruch, 2011; Hildenbrand et al., 2018)

sampling error. Fourth, parcels demonstrate high reliability (Bagozzi and Edwards, 1998; Little et al., 2002; Recha and Chelladurai, 2012; Marsh et al., 2013).

Marsh et al. (2013) differentiated between two strategies of parceling: “distributed strategies and homogeneous strategies.” The former requires distributing items among different parcels either systematically or randomly. The latter entails combining commonly related items (e.g., items with similar wording or items representing the same factor) in the same parcel. Following Marsh et al.’s (2013, p.282) recommendation, when using parcels, the homogeneous strategy should be employed because the distributive one “confounds sources of misfit with the allocation of items to parcels.”

For the multidimensional item parceling, Little et al. (2002, p.167) distinguished between two approaches: “the domain representative approach and the internal consistency approach.” The first approach creates parcels by linking indicators from different facets into items sets. The second one suggests generating parcels by using the items measuring the same facet. The current study espoused the second approach (i.e., internal consistency) because of the following reasons: (1) it maintains the explicit multidimensional nature of the variable; and (2) it permits the unique component of the facet to associate with each other variable in the model (Little et al., 2002). The second method is consistent with what is referred to as the “planned partial disaggregation method”, which entails parceling the entire scale’s items into fewer parcels capturing the construct, and considers the important fact that the allocation of the items to their composites (i.e., parcels) should have rationale theoretical or empirical underpinnings (Hall et al., 1999; Recha and Chelladurai, 2012).

In alignment with Kishton and Widaman’s (1994) suggestion, after generating the parcels, I estimated the internal consistency of each parcel by employing Cronbach’s alpha test. Kishton

and Widaman (1994, p.758) proposed that “if all of the parcels for a construct meet some minimum standard for reliability ( $>0.6$ ) as well as dimensionality (e.g., minimum dimensionality of no. of factors = 1),” it is feasible to incorporate the parcels in the CFA. The results of dimensionality using exploratory factor analysis (EFA) and reliability tests are tabulated below.

Table 6.13: Results of EFA and Reliability Test for Parcels

Multidimensional Constructs	Parcels	No of items	No. of Extracted Factors (Variance %)	Cronbach’s Alpha
Institutional Distance	Regulatory	4	1 (52.51%)	0.77
	Normative	5	1 (52.84%)	0.76
	Cultural	5	1 (55.78%)	0.80
Thriving	Vitality	4	1 (62.79%)	0.80
	Learning	4	1 (64.72%)	0.82
Cross-cultural Psychological Capital	Hope	4	1 (59.76%)	0.76
	Efficacy	4	1 (62.14%)	0.80
	Resilience	4	1 (62.08%)	0.79
	Optimism	4	1 (56.45%)	0.74
Sociocultural Adjustment	Work	3	1 (59.57%)	0.64
	Interaction	4	1 (56.52%)	0.74
Performance	Task	3	1 (71.60%)	0.80
	Contextual	3	1 (66.46%)	0.75

As vividly displayed in table 6.13 above, both the uni-dimensionality and internal consistency have been confirmed. All the parcels exceeded the minimum cutoff value of 0.6 (Nunnally, 1978; Kishon and Widaman, 1994; Hair et al., 2014). Additionally, the uni-dimensionality has been underpinned because each set of items (i.e., one parcel) was captured by only one extracted factor, and the percentage of variance explained by these parcels exceeded 50%.

Consequently, all the parcels were included in the overall CFA as will be illustrated in the next subsection.

### **6.5.2.2. Results of CFA for the Overall Measurement Model**

The overall CFA is composed of ten constructs, namely ID, adjustment, deprivation-autonomy, deprivation-competence, deprivation-relatedness, thriving, CC-PsyCap, knowledge sharing intention, assignment renewal intention, and performance. For the five multidimensional constructs (i.e., ID, adjustment, thriving, CC-PsyCap, and performance), item parceling was employed by creating composite (parcels) of their sub-dimensions, and then, treating them as indicators.

The results of overall CFA, as presented in figure 6.11, revealed that all the standardized loadings exceeded the threshold value of 0.5, and these loadings were statistically significant at  $P < 0.001$ , with values ranging from 0.55 to 0.90. In addition, the goodness of fit statistics provided evidence for good fit for the data ( $\chi^2/df = 1.66$  at  $P < 0.001$ , CFI = 0.95, TLI = 0.94, IFI = 0.95, RMSEA = 0.05). The overall CFA model is presented in figure 6.11.

Based on the results of the overall CFA and the individual constructs' CFA, it can be concluded that reliability, convergent validity, and uni-dimensionality have been established.

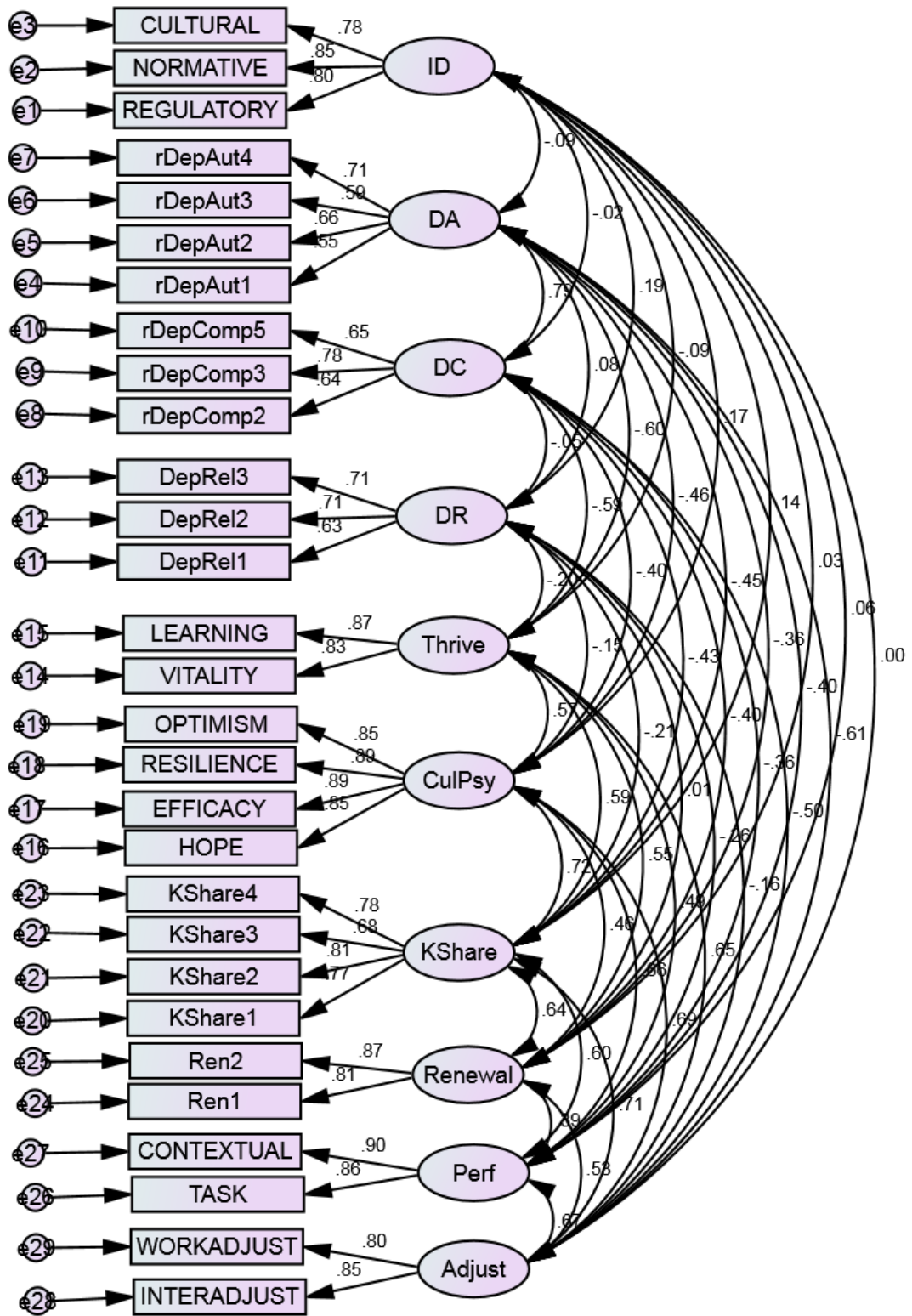


Figure 6.11: CFA for the Overall Measurement Model.

### 6.5.3. Discriminant Validity Assessment and Inter-correlations of constructs

Discriminant validity signifies the uniqueness of one construct relative to other constructs. Fornell and Larcker’s (1981) criterion was used to assess discriminant validity. This criterion entails comparing the value of square root of average variance extracted (AVE) with the latent construct’s correlations. The rule of thumb states that “the square root of each construct’s AVE should be greater than its highest correlation with any other construct” (Hair et al., 2017, p.139). Accordingly, the Pearson correlation matrix was developed and presented in table 6.15, along with displaying the square root of AVE, bolded on the diagonal.

Table 6.14: Descriptive Statistics, Square Root of AVE, and Inter-correlation of Constructs

Constructs	M	SD	Skew	Kurt	AVE	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Institutional Distance	3.41	0.78	-0.25	3.00	0.65	<b>0.81</b>									
Expatriate Adjustment	3.65	0.75	-0.37	3.19	0.73	0.02	<b>0.85</b>								
Deprivation Autonomy	2.52	0.78	0.50	3.64	0.43	-0.09	0.48 ***	<b>0.66</b>							
Deprivation Competence	2.44	0.76	0.17	3.30	0.50	-0.02	-0.38 ***	0.57 ***	<b>0.71</b>						
Deprivation Relatedness	2.82	0.97	0.21	2.49	0.45	0.15 **	-0.10 †	0.03	-0.02	<b>0.67</b>					
Thriving at Workplace	3.64	0.69	-0.52	3.14	0.73	-0.08	0.49 ***	-0.43 ***	-0.38 ***	-0.25 ***	<b>0.85</b>				
CC-PsyCap	4.48	0.78	-0.41	2.95	0.81	0.15 **	0.59 ***	-0.39 ***	-0.33 ***	-0.10 †	0.45 ***	<b>0.90</b>			
Knowledge Sharing	3.87	0.76	-0.70	3.89	0.60	0.14 **	0.58 ***	-0.34 ***	-0.31 ***	-0.15 **	0.46 ***	0.63 ***	<b>0.77</b>		
Assignment Renewal	3.59	1.04	-0.67	3.12	0.73	0.03	0.43 ***	-0.28 ***	-0.31 ***	0.01	0.43 ***	0.40 ***	0.54 ***	<b>0.85</b>	
Expatriate Performance	3.76	0.68	-0.79	3.97	0.81	0.06	0.56 ***	-0.31 ***	-0.28 ***	0.20 ***	0.40 ***	0.57 ***	0.52 ***	0.34 ***	<b>0.90</b>

Note: †p<0.1, \*p<0.05, \*\*p<0.01, \*\*\*p<0.001. Bolded values on the diagonal represent square root of AVE and values below this diagonal represent constructs’ inter-correlation

As can be noticed in Table 6.15, the values of AVE met the cutoff value ( $\geq 0.5$ ) (Hair et al., 2014), except for only deprivation-autonomy and deprivation-relatedness whose values were 0.43 and 0.45, respectively. However, those two values were deemed acceptable because the composite reliability for both constructs was above 0.7. In support of this, Fornell and Larcker (1981, p.46) outlined that “AVE is more conservative than CR.” Accordingly, if the AVE is below 0.5, “the CR is merely sufficient to conclude the adequacy of the construct’s convergent validity, even if more than 50% of the variance is due to error” (Fornell and Larcker, 1981, p.46). Thus, again, the convergent validity of the study’s whole constructs was achieved.

Regarding discriminant validity, it can be remarked that the square root of AVE for each variable is greater than the correlation between this variable and other variables. For instance, the square root of AVE for thriving is 0.85. The highest correlation between thriving and another construct (e.g., knowledge sharing intention) is 0.46. Hence, the discriminant validity for thriving was achieved. By applying the same pattern of comparison, it can be deduced that the discriminant validity was also established for all the present study’s constructs.

Additionally, the results of the Pearson correlation matrix revealed that all the present study’s constructs were correlated. None of the constructs were highly correlated, as the correlation coefficient did not transcend the cutoff value of  $r = 0.9$  (Kline, 2011, p.116; Saunders et al., 2016, p.549). The maximum correlation coefficient is ( $r = 0.66$ ) that is associated with the correlation between CC-PsyCap and knowledge sharing intention. This, in turn, indicates that multicollinearity is not problematic in the hypothesised model.

Ultimately, all the constructs are normally distributed because there were no skewness or kurtosis exceeded the threshold values of 2 or 7, respectively (Curran et al., 1996, p.22). In addition, all the ten constructs were checked and screened against potential outliers using the

box plot test. Some of them were found to have very few outliers. Although some scholars are prone to remove cases captured as outliers (Osborne and Overbay, 2004), others suggest retaining outliers if they represent a unique cohort of the population in order not to limit the generalizability of the results among the whole population (Hair et al., 2014). As a result, a decision was made to retain all outliers in order not to affect the current sample size as well.

Having confirmed the establishment of convergent and discriminant validity, normality, and the inter-correlation of constructs, the next section will discuss the common method bias.

## **6.6. Common Method Bias Assessment**

As the whole data were collected from a single source, it was of utmost importance to examine the impact of common method bias (CMB). Two statistical techniques were employed to diagnose the existence of the CMB. The first method dealt with implementing the commonly used method, known as “Harman’s Single Factor Test” (Podsakoff et al., 2003; Podsakoff et al., 2012) using CFA. In this test, all the indicators were specified to load on only one factor to capture the common influence. The results provided very bad fit ( $\chi^2/df = 6.21$  at  $P < 0.001$ , CFI = 0.58, TLI = 0.55, IFI = 0.58, RMSEA = 0.13). This poor fit can be construed as that CMB is not of major concern for the present study.

Nonetheless, Harman’s single factor test is not free from criticism. Accordingly, following the procedures adopted by previous researchers, I applied the second statistical test, known as the common latent factor (Dulac et al., 2008). This method requires adding a common latent factor to the overall 10 factors measurement model without allowing the common latent to be correlated with the 10 hypothesised factors. The benefits of this method are twofold. First, it helps to detect the probable improvement in the model’s fit. Second, it allows for the estimation



of the variance extracted by this common latent factor (Dulac et al., 2008). The results revealed that the addition of the common factor improved the model's fit ( $\chi^2/df = 1.51$  at  $P < 0.001$ , CFI = 0.97, TLI = 0.96, IFI = 0.97, RMSEA = 0.04) compared to the hypothesised model fit ( $\chi^2/df = 1.66$  at  $P < 0.001$ , CFI = 0.95, TLI = 0.94, IFI = 0.95, RMSEA = 0.05), with a chi-square difference ( $\chi^2$  difference = 94.74,  $df = 29$ ,  $P < 0.001$ ).

As the variance extracted by the common latent factor was only 0.37 (i.e., below the cutoff value of 0.5), the CMB did not seemingly appear as a serious problem, prohibiting the testing of the hypothesised model of the current study (Dulac et al., 2008).

So far, having checked the overall measurement model fit, convergent and discriminant validity establishment, and CMB, now the hypothesised model can be tested using SEM as will be illustrated in the next section.

## **6.7. Structural Model and Hypotheses Testing**

After estimating the measurement model, the examination of the hypothesised structural model can be launched (Brown, 2015). Thus, using Amos 25 and the maximum likelihood estimation method, this section will present the overall hypothesised structural model in two steps. First, the structural model's overall fit will be assessed. Second, the hypothesized/examined direct relationship between constructs will be presented. For moderation hypotheses, the final subsection will display the results of the moderating role of CC-PsyCap using hierarchical regression analysis.

### 6.7.1. Structural Model Overall Fit

Structural equation modeling (SEM) is a statistical technique that combines both multiple regression and exploratory factor analysis. Compared to CFA, SEM examines the relationship between a set of latent variables, involving both the measurement and structural models. Within SEM, latent constructs were termly coined as endogenous (i.e., dependent) and exogenous (i.e., independent) variables. Exogenous variables are those that influence the other examined variables while not being impacted by other constructs in the model. Whilst, endogenous variables are influenced either indirectly by other endogenous variables or directly via exogenous variables in the structural model (Schreiber et al., 2006; Byrne, 2012).

The present study's structural model encompassed nine (9)<sup>72</sup> latent variables, classified as two exogenous (ID and expatriate adjustment) and seven endogenous (deprivation-autonomy, deprivation-competence, deprivation, relatedness, thriving, knowledge sharing intention, assignment renewal intention, and performance) variables. The structural model is portrayed in figure 6.12.

It was of utmost importance to evaluate the model fit of the previous overall SEM to assess whether the hypothesised causal relationships between latent variables fit the data or not. Using the same fit statistics employed in assessing the overall measurement model (Hair et al., 2014), the results of the final structural model overall fit (after allowing latent and measurement errors

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<sup>72</sup> As the construct of cross-cultural psychological capital is mainly examined as a moderator in the relationship between job deprivation and thriving, it was excluded from the structural model because both its direct relationship with thriving and moderating effect will be examined using hierarchical regression analysis in the last section. However, after removing this construct, the overall fit of a nine factors measurement model was re-examined using CFA. The results still provided significant good fit for the data with very slight change in the normed chi-square ( $\chi^2/df = 1.68$  at  $P < 0.001$ , CFI = 0.95, TLI = 0.94, IFI = 0.95, RMSEA = 0.05), with a chi-square difference ( $\chi^2$  difference = 151.678,  $df = 93$ ,  $P < 0.001$ ).

to be correlated) indicated the acceptable fit for the data ( $\chi^2/df = 2.06$  at  $P < 0.001$ , CFI = 0.92, TLI = 0.91, IFI = 0.92, RMSEA = 0.06), thereby underpinning the hypothesised structural model.

Consistent with prior researchers (see Im and Workman-Jr, 2004), this final model allowed for the latent and measurement error to be correlated. Remarkably, the measurement error (e16 <-> e17)<sup>73</sup> that was associated with the two parcels/indicators of vitality and learning was allowed to correlate because prior empirical findings found that vitality and learning were correlated ( $r = 0.82$ ) (see Porath et al., 2012), and undeniably both parcels/indicators measured the same construct. Additionally, the latent error (e26 <-> e29) associating job deprivation-autonomy with thriving was allowed to correlate because job autonomy is theoretically an important enabler of thriving (Spreitzer et al., 2005; Spreitzer et al., 2012), and is empirically significantly correlated with thriving ( $r = 0.26$ ) (see Ren et al., 2015). This final model's (with error correlation) fit statistics ( $\chi^2 = 537.961$ ,  $df = 261$ ,  $P < 0.001$ ) were compared with the initial model with no error correlation ( $\chi^2 = 659.937$ ,  $df = 263$ ,  $P < 0.001$ ). The results bolstered that the model with error correlation provided a significantly better fit than the model with no error correlation, with a chi-square difference test ( $\chi^2$  difference = 121.976,  $df = 2$ ,  $P < 0.001$ ).

After assessing the overall fit of the present study's structural model, the hypothesised/examined direct relationship will be presented in the following subsection.

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<sup>73</sup> See the SEM in AMOS output in appendix (E)

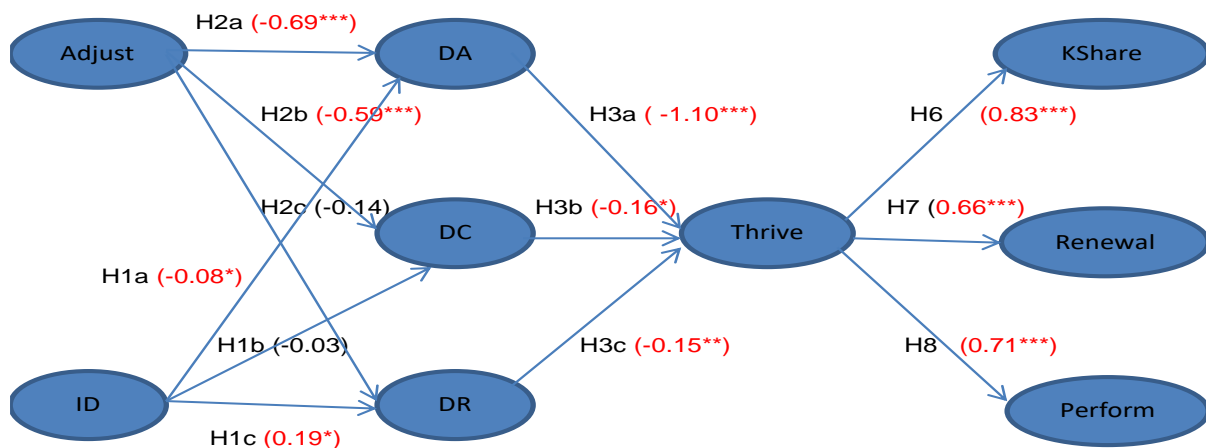


Figure 6.12: The Hypothesized Structural Model\*

(\*) All the statistically significant relationships are presented in red colour on the arrows.

## 6.7.2. Hypothesized Direct Relationships Testing

### 6.7.2.1. Institutional Distance (ID) and Expatriate's Job Deprivation

Hypothesis 1 diagnosed the relationship between ID and expatriate's perceived job deprivation in terms of autonomy (H1a), competence (H1b), and relatedness (H1c). It was hypothesized that ID would be positively related to the three aspects of job deprivation. The findings, unexpectedly, alluded to a significant negative path from institutional distance to job deprivation-autonomy in the opposite direction ( $\beta = -0.08$ ,  $p < 0.05$ ), and a significant positive path from ID to deprivation-relatedness in the expected direction ( $\beta = 0.19$ ,  $p < 0.05$ ). However, ID was not a significant predictor of job deprivation-competence ( $\beta = -0.03$ ,  $p > 0.05$ ). Therefore, H1a was partially supported and H1c was supported, whereas H1b was not supported.

### **6.7.2.2. Adjustment and Expatriate's Job Deprivation**

Hypothesis 2 posited a negative relationship between expatriate adjustment and perceived job deprivation-autonomy (H2a), competence (H2b), and relatedness (H2c). The results demonstrated a significant negative path from expatriate adjustment to both job deprivation-autonomy ( $\beta = - 0.69, p < 0.001$ ) and competence ( $\beta = - 0.59, p < 0.001$ ). However, the relationship between adjustment and job deprivation-relatedness was negative, but not statistically significant ( $\beta = - 0.14, p > 0.05$ ). Hence, H2a and H2b were supported, whilst H2c was not supported.

### **6.7.2.3. Expatriate's Job Deprivation and Thriving at Workplace**

Hypothesis 3 sought the negative relationship between expatriate's job deprivation in relation to autonomy (H3a), competence (H3b), relatedness (H3c). The results supported the statistically significant negative relationship between the three dimensions of job deprivation: autonomy ( $\beta = - 1.10, p < 0.001$ ), competence ( $\beta = - 0.16, p < 0.05$ ), and relatedness ( $\beta = - 0.15, p < 0.01$ ) and thriving. Accordingly, the three hypotheses H3a, H3b, and H3c were supported.

### **6.7.2.4. Expatriate's Thriving and Knowledge-Sharing Intention**

Hypothesis 6 examined the expected positive relationship between thriving at workplace and expatriate's knowledge sharing intention. The findings captured a statistically significant positive path from thriving to knowledge sharing intention ( $\beta = 0.83, p < 0.001$ ). Hence, H6 was supported.

### **6.7.2.5. Expatriate's Thriving and Current Assignment Renewal Intention**

Hypothesis 7 tested the anticipated positive relationship between thriving and expatriate's intention for current international assignment renewal. The findings found a significant positive path from thriving ( $\beta = 0.66, p < 0.001$ ) to current assignment renewal intention. As a result, H7 was supported.

### **6.7.2.6. Expatriate's Thriving and Performance**

Hypothesis 8 scrutinised the expected positive association between thriving and expatriate performance. The results underpinned this hypothesised relationship, as thriving was found to be a statistically significant positive antecedent of performance ( $\beta = 0.71, p < 0.001$ ). Therefore, H8 was supported.

## **6.7.3. The Direct and Moderating Role of Cross-Cultural Psychological Capital (CC-PsyCap)**

Using hierarchical regression analysis, this sub-section examines and presents the moderating role of CC-PsyCap in the predicted negative relationship between expatriate's job deprivation in relation to autonomy (H4a), competence (H4b), and relatedness (H4c), and thriving, in addition to its expected direct positive effect on thriving (H5). For the purpose of investigating the moderating effect, this was conducted in two steps. Firstly, CC-PsyCap was incorporated in the regression equation, involving the three dimensions, along with control variables as shown in model 3. This also helped to test (H5), addressing the direct relationship between CC-PsyCap and thriving. Then, the interaction terms were created by the multiplication of CC-PsyCap with the three dimensions of job deprivation (see models 4-6) in table 6.15.

Table 6.15: Results of Hierarchical Regression Analysis of the Direct and Moderating Role of CC-PsyCap

Predictors	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3	Model 4	Model 5	Model 6
	B	$\beta$	B	B	$\beta$	$\beta$
<b>Control Variables:</b>						
Age	0.07	0.08	0.03	0.03	0.03	0.02
Gender	- 0.07	- 0.06	- 0.05	- 0.05	- 0.05	- 0.06
Marital Status	- 0.07	- 0.06	- 0.08	- 0.08	- 0.08	- 0.08
Assignment Tenure	0.13*	0.05	0.06	0.06	0.06	0.06
Industry:						
2	0.19*	0.09	- 0.00	- 0.00	- 0.00	- 0.00
3	- 0.09	- 0.07	- 0.08	- 0.08	- 0.08	- 0.08
4	0.05	0.06	- 0.05	- 0.05	- 0.05	- 0.06
5	0.03	0.03	0.01	0.01	0.01	0.01
6	0.04	0.02	0.01	0.01	0.01	0.01
7	0.03	0.05	0.02	0.02	0.02	0.02
8	- 0.01	0.01	- 0.02	- 0.02	- 0.02	- 0.02
9	- 0.06	- 0.07	- 0.06	- 0.06	- 0.06	- 0.06
10	0.03	0.03	0.01	0.01	0.01	0.01
11	0.02	0.04	0.01	0.01	0.01	0.01
12	0.01	0.14*	0.14*	0.14*	0.14*	0.14*
13	- 0.11	- 0.04	- 0.07	- 0.07	- 0.07	- 0.07
14	- 0.07	- 0.05	- 0.05	- 0.05	- 0.05	- 0.05
15	- 0.13*	- 0.10	- 0.08	- 0.08	- 0.08	- 0.08
16	- 0.02	- 0.01	- 0.00	- 0.00	- 0.00	- 0.00
<b>Main Effects:</b>						
Dep-Autonomy (DA)		- 0.30***	- 0.22***	- 0.27	- 0.22***	- 0.23***
Dep-Competence (DC)		- 0.21**	- 0.16**	- 0.15***	- 0.28	- 0.16**
Dep-Relatedness (DR)		- 0.24***	- 0.23***	- 0.23***	- 0.23***	0.30
CulPsyCap			0.31***	0.27	0.24	0.57
<b>Interaction Terms:</b>						
DA x CulPsyCap				0.05		
DC x CulPsyCap					0.12	
DR x CulPsyCap						- 0.57
Overall <i>F</i>	2.19**	6.79***	8.43***	8.06***	8.07***	8.28***
Overall <i>R</i> <sup>2</sup>	0.12	0.34	0.40	0.40	0.40	0.41
Adjusted <i>R</i> <sup>2</sup>	0.06	0.29	0.35	0.35	0.35	0.36
VIF	< 10	< 10	< 10	< 10	< 10	< 10

Note: \**p*<0.05, \*\**p*<0.01, \*\*\**p*<0.001. N = 313

As evident in table 6.15 above, in model 1, all the control variables were inserted in the regression equation. Only assignment tenure was significantly and positively associated with thriving ( $\beta = 0.13, p < 0.05$ ). All the control variables explained 6% of the variance in thriving.

In model 2, as a robustness check, thriving was regressed on the three dimensions of job deprivation with the control variables. The results showed that these three aspects were statistically significantly and negatively associated with thriving, as the values of the standardized beta were ( $\beta = - 0.30, p < 0.001$ ), ( $\beta = - 0.21, p < 0.001$ ), and ( $\beta = - 0.24, p < 0.001$ ) for autonomy, competence, and relatedness, respectively. These three dimensions alone explained 23% of the variance in thriving. Again, these results provided additional support for H3a, H3b, and H3c.

In model 3, before running the interaction effect, CC-PsyCap was included as an ordinary independent variable to test its direct effect on thriving (H5). The findings suggested that the direct relationship between CC-PsyCap and thriving was positive and significant ( $\beta = 0.31, p < 0.001$ ). In addition, alone, CC-PsyCap explained 6.39% of the variance in thriving. Hence, H5 was supported

In models 4, 5, and 6, none of the three interaction terms was found to be statistically significant, indicating that CCPsyCap had no moderating effect in buffering the negative relationship between expatriate's job deprivation and thriving. Therefore, H4a, H4b, and H4c were not supported.



Finally, it is worth mentioning that, as part of regression post estimations, multicollinearity was checked for each of the 6 models using the variance inflation factor (VIF), and the values of the VIF did not exceed the common cutoff threshold of 10 (Hair et al., 2014, p.200).

## **6.8. Summary of the Analysis Chapter**

This chapter aimed at conducting the statistical analysis procedures on the primary data collected via questionnaire from expatriates working in the subsidiaries of foreign organisations operating in both industrial and service sectors in Egypt. These statistical procedures involved screening and examining the data against missing data and normality. All the row data were found to follow the normal distribution, with no values exceeded 2 and 7 for skewness and kurtosis, respectively, and the very few missed data in the demographic section were handled appropriately. Then, the reliability and convergent validity of all the present study's constructs were assessed, and the results of the Cronbach's alpha test demonstrated adequate internal consistency ( $\alpha > 0.7$ ), and the findings of CFA supported the adequacy of constructs' convergent validity ( $CR > 0.7$ , and all the individual items' loadings  $> 0.5$ ). Also, the discriminant validity was established, as the square root of the AVE for each variable was greater than its highest correlation with other variables in the Pearsons's correlation matrix. In addition, the CMB was assessed using both Harman's single factor test and the common latent factor method, and the findings supported that the CMB is not a major concern, and not problematic for the current study. Finally, the hypothesised structural model was examined using SEM, and the results found strong support for the majority of the hypothesised relationships as summarised in the following table 6.16.

Table 6.16: A Summary of the Hypothesised Relationships Testing Results

Hypothesis	Hypothesised Relationships	Standardized Coefficient	Result
H1a	ID → Job Deprivation-Autonomy	- 0.08*	Partially Supported
H1b	ID → Job Deprivation-Competence	- 0.03	Not Supported
H1c	ID → Job Deprivation-Relatedness	0.19*	Supported
H2a	Adjustment → Job Deprivation-Autonomy	- 0.69***	Supported
H2b	Adjustment → Job Deprivation-Competence	- 0.59***	Supported
H2c	Adjustment → Job Deprivation-Relatedness	- 0.14	Not Supported
H3a	Job Deprivation-Autonomy → Thriving	- 1.10***	Supported
H3b	Job Deprivation-Competence → Thriving	- 0.16*	Supported
H3c	Job Deprivation-Relatedness → Thriving	- 0.15**	Supported
H4a	Job Deprivation-Autonomy*CC-PsyCap → Thriving	0.05	Not Supported
H4b	Job Deprivation-Competence*CC-PsyCap → Thriving	0.12	Not Supported
H4c	Job Deprivation-Relatedness*CC-PsyCap → Thriving	- 0.57	Not Supported
H5	CC-PsyCap → Thriving	0.31***	Supported
H6	Thriving → Knowledge Sharing Intention	0.83***	Supported
H7	Thriving → Assignment Renewal Intention	0.66***	Supported
H8	Thriving → Performance	0.71***	Supported

## **Chapter 7: Discussion and Conclusion**

### **7.1. Introduction**

This chapter seeks to discuss the key findings resulted from the hypothesised and statistically tested relationships and the theoretical and practical implications of the present study. The structure of this chapter is fivefold. The first section focuses on discussing the overall results in relation to the research questions highlighted in chapter 1. Afterwards, the conclusion, theoretical contributions, and practical implications are discussed in the following sections. Finally, the limitations of the present study are presented, and some future research orientations are provided.

### **7.2. Discussion of the main (direct) relationships**

The discussion of the findings is presented in accordance with the research question considered in the following sequence:

7.2.1. Is there a statistical relationship between ID and expatriates' perceived job deprivation regarding autonomy, competence, and relatedness?

The hypothesised relationships regarding the first research question expected a positive relationship between ID and expatriates' perceived job deprivation regarding the abovementioned three needs. That is, the higher the ID between the expatriates' home country and the host one is, the greater the degree of the three aspects of job deprivation. The results demonstrated partial support for this relationship. Specifically, and surprisingly, expatriates' perceived ID served as a significant negative predictor of job deprivation-autonomy, which contrary to expectation, implied that the greater the perceived institutional distance, the lower

the feeling of job deprivation-autonomy pronounced by expatriates (the greater the discretion granted to them) on their international assignments in the foreign subsidiaries operating in Egypt. The result itself appears to be positive and warrants further discussion, as it does not seem to align with the classical axioms of institutional theory in terms of that compliance and mirroring practices of the host country is obligatory to legitimate expatriates' actions/behaviours and minimise uncertainty and liability of foreignness via "coercive and mimetic isomorphism" (DiMaggio and Powell, 1983; Kostova and Zaheer, 1999; Fang et al., 2013; Scott, 2014) that was expected to refrain their feelings of role discretion due to ID.

This unexpected result can be plausibly interpreted drawing on Kostova et al.'s (2008) criticism of the institutional theory, in which they provoked that isomorphism is an unnecessary and impossible condition for MNCs to seek legitimacy and minimise the uncertainty of institutional systems' differences when operating in a highly institutionally distant country. This is because MNCs are unique entities, belong to different groups, and provide valuable and appreciable things to domestic communities. Accordingly, they are more likely to be waived from local isomorphism pressures and to be granted "institutional freedom" either to have the autonomy to follow local practices or other best patterns/practices fitting them. Moreover, even the host country (Egypt) exerted pressure to enforce some legal and regulatory aspects through coercion, the compliance and degree of responsiveness to normative and cultural aspects would be minimal (Kostova et al., 2008, p.999). Further clarification can also be provided by emergent literature on the host country's institutional profile, suggesting that when MNCs operate in developing countries (e.g., Egypt), attached with low quality or underdeveloped institutions and high uncertainty, foreign subsidiaries (i.e., where expatriates are relocated) are granted more autonomy to respond to external uncertainties (Tao et al., 2018). Transferring these

critical points to expatriates in the Egyptian context, it can be inferred that as expatriates are deemed as a distinctive “elite” group with unique expertise that is rare in the local Egyptian community, they are given greater discretion when deciding on some aspects of their jobs in a different institutional environment. Consistent with this logical deduction, Zhang and Oczkowski (2016) concluded that when western expatriate managers transfer to a culturally (e.g., from a low to high power) distant country, they are granted the necessary power and authority to smoothly execute their new role. In such a situation, working conditions are accommodated to expatriates, rather than asking the latter to adapt to the former. Thus, it became quite clear why perceived institutional distance was negatively associated with job deprivation-autonomy, not positively as expected.

Regarding the relationship between ID and the competence aspect of job deprivation, the results found no support for ID to be an antecedent of expatriates’ job deprivation-competence. However, the results revealed full support for the significant positive effect of perceived ID and expatriates’ job deprivation-relatedness. This means that expatriates pronounce more feelings of loneliness and lack the sense of affiliation and belongingness with local colleagues when the distance between Egypt and their home countries is high. This result corroborates the rationale of complementing the P-E fit approach with the institutional theory that allowed expatriates to evaluate to what extent the distance between Egypt and their home countries constitutes a misfit for them, thereby resulting in different levels of strain (Edwards, 1996; Ramsey, 2013). Generally, this third result accords with the sole study by Ramsey (2013) in Western cultures where high ID positively and significantly predicted both expatriates’ job and travel strain. The previous results add weight to the very limited body of research by examining

the factors contributing to expatriates' job deprivation, like ID, and broadening this in a non-Western context.

7.2.2. Is there a statistical relationship between expatriates' adjustment and their perceived job deprivation regarding autonomy, competence, and relatedness?

The second question queried the relationship between expatriates' adjustment and the three aspects of job deprivation. It was proposed that expatriates' adjustment would be negatively associated with job deprivation regarding each of the three basic needs. That is when expatriates are highly adjusted to their work roles and interactive communications with host colleagues, they are less likely to perceive that the host work environment deprives them of their basic needs of relatedness, competence, and autonomy. The results of the current study found partial support for this relationship. Specifically, as anticipated, expatriate adjustment was found to have a significant negative impact on perceived job deprivation for only autonomy and competence. However, the effect of expatriates' adjustment on job deprivation-relatedness was negative in the expected direction but non-significant.

Although the relationship between adjustment and job deprivation regarding the three basic needs has not been empirically linked before, the previous results are in general consensus with the existing literature underpinning the significance of adjustment in alleviating negative outcomes, such as job strain (Hechanova et al., 2003) and withdrawal cognitions (Bhaskar-Shrinivas et al., 2005; Shaffer and Harrison, 1998; Shaffer et al. 2006) and promoting positive outcomes, such as job satisfaction (Hechanova et al., 2003; Shaffer and Harrison, 1998; Bhaskar-Shrinivas et al., 2005; Takeuchi et al., 2009) and performance (Qin and Baruch, 2010; Lee and Sukoco, 2010; Abdul Malek and Budhwar, 2015; Lee and Kartika, 2014).

7.2.3. Is there a statistical relationship between expatriates' perceived job deprivation regarding autonomy, competence, and relatedness and thriving at workplace?

In this third question, the hypothesised relationship proposed a negative association between expatriates' perceived job deprivation regarding the three psychological needs of autonomy, competence, and relatedness, and thriving at workplace. As expected, and in the same direction, the results of the present study demonstrated that deprivation perceived by expatriates regarding these three psychological needs had a strong significant effect on their thriving at workplace overseas. Thus, higher levels of job deprivation of these three needs inhibit expatriates from experiencing a sense of vitality and capturing learning opportunities on their international assignments.

The results are consistent with the basic theoretical assumptions of the self-determination theory and the socially embedded model of thriving, which jointly postulated that the satisfaction of these three instinct needs is quite essential for individuals' psychological well-being and thriving (Deci and Ryan, 2000; Spreitzer et al., 2005; Spreitzer and Porath, 2014). This also coincides with the findings of some previous domestic research, in which the gratification of these three needs was significantly associated with subjective vitality (Bartholomew et al., 2011) and self-directed learning (Bauer and Mulder, 2006). With regard to the specific needs, it has been verified that thriving was significantly predicted task autonomy (Jiang et al., 2020) and belongingness/connectivity (Carmeli and Spreitzer, 2009; Gkorezis et al., 2013). Compared with Ren et al.'s (2015) research in the expatriation context that considered the same relationships, the current study's finding provided partial support by virtue that they found a significant effect for only job deprivation-competence on thriving, but not for the autonomy and relatedness aspects. This inconsistency may be ascribed to the

differences in the comparison mechanism used in capturing the degree of deprivation, as Ren and colleagues (2015) employed “other comparisons” with local colleagues; however, the present study adopted the “self-referent/self-comparison”. The results also add weight to the significance of the latter approach relative to the former, along with its suitability for expatriates, at least in the Egyptian context, as expected before. Thus, self-reference is an effective mechanism in capturing the extent of job deprivation perceived by expatriates when comparing situations between the home and host country.

On international assignments, it is more likely for expatriates to compare whether these important needs are fulfilled more in their overseas jobs relative to their previous home jobs or not. Therefore, high perceived job deprivation-autonomy not only confines expatriates’ volition on various aspects of their jobs but also thwart thriving because they may not act agentically due to losing opportunities of explorations of new ideas and approaches while working abroad (Spreitzer et al., 2005; Spreitzer et al., 2012). Analogously, when the host job limits expatriates’ capacity to fully utilise their previous skills, abilities, knowledge, and experience and develop new ones simultaneously to function effectively overseas, they may perceive deprivation of competence due to their lack of social worth in the sense that the host work environment does not trust, respect, and appreciate their unique capabilities and expertise. Such a negative perception about the host work environment (i.e., lack of trust and respect) will diminish thriving (Spreitzer et al., 2005; Spreitzer et al., 2012; Ren et al., 2015). Equally important, when expatriates highly perceive resentment of connection and belongingness with the local Egyptian colleagues at work relative to their previous affiliation with social ties in their home country, thriving is less likely to occur. This is due to relational resources and high-quality connections that are frequently conceived as critical determinants of thriving, as



highlighted in the existing body of literature (Spreitzer et al., 2005; Heaphy and Dutton, 2008; Carmeli and Spreitzer, 2009; Feeney and Collins, 2015).

To sum up, the gratification of the previous psychological needs on overseas jobs relative to their prior home jobs may maximise the likelihood of expatriates' thriving on international assignments.

7.2.4. Does expatriates' CC-PsyCap play a moderating role in the relationship between expatriates' perceptions of job deprivation with respect to autonomy, competence and relatedness, and thriving at their workplace?

Regarding this fourth question, it was proposed that CC-PsyCap could serve as a moderating role by buffering the negative effect of the three aspects of job deprivation on expatriates' thriving at workplace, such that this negative relationship would be weaker for expatriates with high CC-PsyCap. Contrary to expectations, the present study's empirical findings did not find support for the moderating effect of CC-PsyCap on the negative association between expatriates' job deprivation with regard to the three psychological needs (autonomy, competence, and relatedness) and thriving. This finding also contradicted the results of previous extant research in the domestic setting where PsyCap was documented generally as a significant direct alleviator for job stress (Avey et al., 2009; Avey et al., 2011a; Baron et al., 2016) and particularly as a significant moderator for the relationships between negative (stressful) predictors and outcomes, such as perceived threats of terrorism and subordinates' performance (Raja et al., 2020), perceived organisational politics and job satisfaction and performance (Abbas et al., 2014), workplace incivility and thriving (Nawaz et al., 2020), and hindrance stressors on employees' citizenship behaviours (Khelifat et al., 2021).

Indeed, this surprising result counters one of the most distinctive corollaries of the COR theory of stress, namely “resource replacement”, which states that “although the loss of resources is stressful, individuals may employ other resources to offset this loss” (Hobfoll, 1988, p.518). From the perspective of COR theory, these three basic needs are considered as resources, with autonomy and work relationships classified as condition/contextual resources and competence as a personal resource. That is, when expatriates encounter stressful situations, such as losing resources (autonomy, competence, and relatedness), they are expected to substitute this loss by employing other possessed dynamic resources (CC-PsyCap) in order to alleviate the impact of this negative event and react calmly with it, thereby enhancing gains (thriving). Unfortunately, this theoretical expectation was not empirically underpinned for expatriates in the Egyptian case, but, in the meantime, it is risky to generalise this finding to expatriates in other contexts.

Hobfoll (2002) has raised some critical thoughts that may help cautiously interpreting this result and its inconsistency with previous research. Specifically, he noted that individuals call all possible resources to navigate stressful events (i.e., resource loss), and well-being may be restored if the lost resource can be substituted by another new valuable resource. Nevertheless, such a new resource sometimes may not be sufficient to accomplish effective coping with stressors (Hobfoll, 2002). Applying this to expatriates in the Egyptian context, it can be deduced that higher levels of CC-PsyCap might be either less valuable resources relative to the three basic needs from which expatriates were deprived or inadequate to alleviate the negative impact of job deprivation (stressors) on thriving. Accordingly, this leaves a fruitful avenue for future research to reinvestigate the same relationship in other cultural contexts or explore other potential moderators, such as stable personality traits (e.g., emotional stability) as being documented as a significant moderator for some aspects of job deprivation in Ren and

colleagues' (2015) research. He further went on to conclude despite the importance of possessing higher levels of resources in dilating stressful events and achieving better psychological outcomes, having too many resources is not always advantageous and should have a threshold.

7.2.5. Is there a statistical relationship between CC-PsyCap and expatriates' thriving at workplace?

Besides its moderating role, the direct effect of CC-PsyCap on thriving has also been investigated. Drawing on COR theory, it was speculated that CC-PsyCap and expatriates' thriving would be positively correlated. The present study results unveiled that CC-PsyCap had a significant positive impact on expatriates' thriving. The result is congruent with the key precept of COR theory, postulating that "people strive to obtain and protect their personal and social resources and that they experience stress when circumstances threaten or result in loss of these valuable states" (Hobfoll et al., 1990, p.466). Additionally, this theory affirms that possessing high levels of resources is particularly beneficial in stressful circumstances because it leads to better psychological outcomes, active goal-directed behaviour, and superior functioning (Hobfoll, 2002). That is when expatriates have higher levels of cross-cultural self-efficacy, hope, optimism, and resilience, they are more likely to experience thriving at their workplace. Despite the scant research on CC-PsyCap in the international context to date, the current result provides further indirect corroboration to the very limited (only two) studies in the sojourner context, demonstrating that CC-PsyCap is essential to reinforce cross-cultural adjustment (Dollwet and Reichard, 2014) and motivational cultural intelligence (Yunlu and Clapp-Smith, 2014). It is noteworthy to highlight that the previous two studies targeted

respondents who travelled for business or lived outside their citizenship countries for a period of time, but not an expatriate cohort as in the present study.

However, this finding is empirically in alignment with the extant domestic research by Nawaz et al. (2020) and Paterson et al. (2014), in which the latter found a significant path flowing from PsyCap to thriving, albeit not being their main focus. Also, the result is deemed in a general consensus with previous research that documented the superiority of PsyCap in reinforcing various positive work-related outcomes, such as psychological well-being (Avey et al., 2010a; Baron et al., 2016; Choi and Lee, 2014), organisational commitment, work happiness, positive emotions, job satisfaction, engagement, performance (Luthans et al., 2007; Luthans et al., 2008b; Avey et al., 2008; Rego et al., 2010; Avey et al., 2011a; Badran and Youssef, 2015; Kang and Busser, 2018; Wen and Liu-Lastres, 2021), and global leadership competencies (Vogelgesang et al., 2014).

Although the moderating role of CC-PsyCap was not significant and effective in buffering the stressors of job deprivation on thriving as previously outlined, it is still important for expatriates to have high levels of such caravan of dynamic resources because it was directly and significantly associated with expatriates' thriving on their international assignment in Egypt. Accordingly, this underpins the fact that individual differences (i.e., personality characteristics) are crucial for expatriates in dealing effectively with unfamiliar host work environments (Caligiuri and Tarique, 2012; Min et al., 2015).

7.2.6. Is there a statistical relationship between thriving and expatriates' willingness to share tacit-knowledge?

Concerning the sixth research question, thriving was examined as an antecedent of expatriates' willingness to share tacit knowledge with local colleagues. The current study's results uncovered that expatriates' thriving had a significant positive effect on their intention to share tacit-knowledge with local colleagues in the Egyptian workplace. The finding aligns with the theoretical assumptions derived from Spreitzer et al.'s (2005) model of thriving complemented with social capital theory (Nahapiet and Ghoshal, 1998). That is thriving expatriates tend to develop high-quality relational resources (i.e., relational capital) due to acting agentially through heedful relating with local colleagues, and thus, relational capital facilitates knowledge sharing intention with local peers as consistent with empirical research (Bonache and Zarraga-Oberty, 2008; Chang et al., 2012; Chang and Smale, 2013).

The findings also lend support for the prosocial motivation theorists who claim that thriving individuals (i.e., expatriates) possess cognitive resources that induce them to prosocially execute their job responsibilities, and this prosocial motivation enhances their propensity to impact their colleagues' work life and contribute to the benefits of the workplace (Frazier and Tupper, 2018; Grant 2007; Grant and Berg, 2011). Accordingly, thriving expatriates are more prone to be prosocially motivated to positively influence local colleagues' work life by sharing tacit-knowledge with them. Also, this implicitly underpins theoretical (Gagne, 2009) and empirical research (Hau et al., 2013), showing that intrinsic motivation significantly predicts knowledge sharing intention.

Additionally, the result is consistent with the social exchange theory as a third theoretical underpinning (Homans, 1958; Blau, 1986; Goulner, 1960; Emerson, 1976), construing the

hypothesised relationship that is premised on exchange relationships, the notion of reciprocity, and the dyadic process of taking and give (Hau et al., 2013). As such, thriving expatriates experience zest and learning opportunities, with the latter emerging from heedful relating and interactions with local counterparts who are conceived to be a major source for leveraging expatriates' culture-specific skills and knowledge. Thus, as expatriates may recognise informational assistance offered by local colleagues as a favour, they, in turn, may feel self-obligated to reciprocate it by sharing their tacit-knowledge with them. In support of this, Varma, Pichler, and Budhwar (2011, p.116) state that "providing role information to peers is probably seen more like a fair exchange, whereby the HCN can also learn more about the organization, and headquarters, from the expatriate."

7.2.7. Is there a statistical relationship between thriving and expatriates' willingness to renew their current assignment?

Regarding the seventh research question, thriving was examined as an antecedent of expatriates' willingness to renew their current assignment. It was anticipated that the relationship between these two variables to be positive. The findings unveiled that thriving had a strong positive and significant impact on expatriates' intention to renew their international assignment. Consistent with what was hypothesised in the present study based on Spreitzer et al.'s (2005) framework of thriving, it seemed that expatriates who experience vitality and learning seek to prolong reinforcing circumstances (e.g., fruitful international assignment) and yearn for the reoccurrence of these positive events and circumstances (Collins, 1993; Kark and Carmeli, 2009). In other words, thriving expatriates may continue exploring chances to sustain thriving experiences. Accordingly, the reinforcement of the notion of renewing international assignments has a salutary effect not only on maintaining expatriates feeling energised but also

on the ongoing process of skills and knowledge acquisition that may contribute to their know-how career capital and career advancement (Jokinen et al., 2008; Porath et al., 2012) that corresponds the motives of accepting overseas assignments (Stahl et al., 2002).

#### 7.2.8. Is there a statistical relationship between thriving and expatriates' performance?

The last research question queried the relationship between thriving and expatriate performance. It was hypothesised that thriving would be positively connected with expatriates' performance. The findings unfolded that thriving had a potent positive and significant impact on expatriates' performance. That is when expatriates feel energised and motivated to learn, they have a greater propensity to function well in executing their tasks (task performance) and establishing constructive rapport with local colleagues (contextual performance). The result is in alignment with the theory-driven proposition, suggesting that thriving is conducive to sustainable performance (Spreitzer et al., 2012; Spreitzer and Porath, 2012). This finding is congruent with some domestic empirical research that also stipulated the potent predictiveness of thriving on individual job performance (Porath et al., 2012; Li, 2015; Ali et al., 2018; Frazier and Tupper, 2018; Kleine et al., 2019), task mastery (Niessen et al., 2017), and creative performance (Christensen-Salem et al., 2020).

Overall, as previously noted, thriving was firstly examined in the expatriation setting by Ren et al. (2015), who found that thriving resulted in expatriates' engagement and actual retention. Moving beyond their results, thriving was found to crystallise expatriates' intention to renew their current assignment. Given the dearth of research on thriving and its outcomes in the expatriate context and the novelty of the present study in empirically linking knowledge sharing intention and assignment renewal intention for the first time as expected outcomes of thriving, the possibility of comparing results is quite limited. However, the present study provides strong

corroboration to previous domestic research that found that thriving is an optimal predictor of myriad positive outcomes as previously outlined.

### **7.3. Conclusion**

This thesis has entirely attempted to answer eight main research questions, with emphasis on the antecedent and consequences of expatriates' perceived job deprivation and thriving. Drawing on the data collected from a diversified sample of expatriates coming from a wide range of American, European, Asian, and Middle Eastern countries, the results provided evidence that ID had a significant positive impact on job deprivation-relatedness; however, it had an unexpectedly significant negative effect on job deprivation autonomy. Furthermore, expatriates' adjustment was found to have a significant negative influence on their perceived job deprivation with respect to the autonomy and competence aspects.

In addition, utilising the integration between relative deprivation and self-determination theories and the "self-referent" comparison mechanism, the present study investigated the relationship between expatriate job deprivation and thriving at workplace. The empirical results highlighted that deprivation of the three psychological needs was negatively and significantly associated with thriving. This implies the necessity of gratifying the needs of autonomy, relatedness, and competence more on expatriates' overseas jobs relative to their home jobs, as this creates a hindrance for them to experience vigour and learning opportunities (thriving) on their international assignment.

By looking at the role of individual differences in reacting to stressful events (job deprivation), CC-PsyCap's role was investigated as a moderator for the relationship between job deprivation and thriving and as a direct predictor of thriving. The findings uncovered that while the



moderating effect was not significant, it is still a significant antecedent of thriving. Therefore, based on the Egyptian context-specific results, it can be concluded that although possessing high levels of psychological resources is essential to achieving better psychological outcomes, not all resources are equally important, valuable, replaceable, and effective in coping with stressors.

Finally, thriving was verified as a gauge for expatriates' success on international assignments, manifested in three important outcomes. The results have shown that high levels of thriving fortify expatriates' willingness to share tacit-knowledge with local colleagues, stimulate their intention to renew their current assignments, and promote their performance.

#### **4.4. Practical Implications**

From a practical stance, the present study's results suggest some important implications that deserve substantial attention from MNCs and HR managers in terms of managing expatriates in foreign subsidiaries. First, thriving was documented as a strong driver for numerous positive outcomes. Therefore, the host subsidiaries should dedicate considerable attention to create a thriving work environment where expatriates are provided with chances for expressing vigour and learning. Recent research suggested that this can be achieved by investing in training programs that stimulate positivity at workplace (Christenesen-Salem et al., 2020). For example, host organisations can arrange formal/informal events where expatriates and local colleagues can meet together and discuss work and non-work-related issues. This will not only enhance expatriates' learning and relational capital building that is contemplated as an implicit mechanism for their willingness to share knowledge with local counterparts but also generate a work context where knowledge sharing becomes pervasively normalised (Frazier and Tupper, 2018). In doing so, MNCs may effectively realize one of the important objectives of sending

expatriates on international assignments, which is knowledge sharing/transfer. Additionally, such programs are more likely to improve expatriates' productivity and health (Spreitzer et al., 2012). Organisations need thriving expatriates because it surpasses conventional constructs, such as commitment and satisfaction, in explaining performance (Porath et al., 2012). Given that thriving is dynamic and the present results provided evidence on how it is related to assignment renewal intention, HR managers are recommended to monitor (assess and measure) expatriates' levels of energy and learning over different temporal points until the end of their assignment. Those expatriates who consistently report greater levels of energy and learning should be asked at the end of their assignment whether they are desirous of renewing their current assignment. Offering another period of the assignment will help MNCs to retain thriving expatriates (unique assets) who have already adjusted, thrived, and expect to continue accomplishing successful outcomes. Also, MNCs will save substantial costs related to the relocation of new expatriates (see Black and Gregersen, 1999; Collings et al., 2007) who are not guaranteed to succeed overseas like those (thriving expatriates) approaching the termination of current assignments.

Second, the present study provided significant insights regarding expatriates' personal psychological resources that should be carefully considered in the practices of expatriates' selection, hiring, and training. It has become clear that possessing high levels of cross-cultural PsyCap (efficacy, hope, resilience, and optimism) resulted in high levels of thriving, as shown in the previous empirical research and the present results. The importance of PsyCap for organisations was stipulated by Karatepe and Karadas (2014, p.141), who stated that "acquiring and retaining a pool of employees high in PsyCap is important because they can contribute to a resourceful work environment, serve as role models, and generate a demonstration effect

among current employees low in PsyCap.” Consequently, MNCs’ HR managers are urged to incorporate a CC-PsyCap questionnaire (PCQ) as a rigorous testing procedure for selecting expatriates before departure. This allows filtering nominated expatriates for international assignments and ensures the inclusion of qualified expatriates with high levels of CC-PsyCap and the exclusion of non-qualified ones. Concomitantly, even for current expatriates, it is critical to invest in developing their positive dynamic resources. Perhaps one of the distinctive features of CC-PsyCap is typically known as “State-Like”, which implies that the construct is “relatively malleable and open for development” relative to the unchangeable and static nature of the big five personality traits typically recognised as “Trait-Like” (Luthans et al., 2007, p.544). In support of this, the meta-analysis by Wilson et al. (2013) outlined that cross-cultural self-efficacy was significantly more effective in explaining sociocultural adjustment relative to the big five traits. Also, Dollwet and Reichard (2014) found the predictiveness of CC-PsyCap was more powerful on adjustment when compared to cultural intelligence. Therefore, designing pre-departure and post-arrival positive psychology-based training programs can flourish and develop expatriates’ psychological resources. For example, emergent research suggested that web-based training interventions are effective, convenient, and less costly to improve positive resources (Kang and Bassar, 2018). This option may be relevant in the case of expatriates being domiciled in physically distant subsidiaries, and the parent company is the convenor of training. Such training can include expatriates’ participation in goal setting, cultural group learning, and pathway exercise (Luthans et al., 2008c).

Third, besides individuals’ (expatriates) attributes, the contextual conditions of the host workplace appeared to be significant enablers of thriving. In particular, expatriates seemed to make self-comparison regarding the extent to which their three basic needs of competence,

relatedness, and autonomy are satisfied in their overseas jobs compared to their previous home jobs. Accordingly, this exacerbates some important implications for HR managers regarding expatriates' job design practices and the features of the host workplace. For instance, managers should design expatriates' jobs with greater role discretion, such as providing flexible work arrangements and having the autonomy to decide on the number of working hours and where job tasks are executed. Also, empowering HR practices are conceived to be essential to autonomy satisfaction. Regarding competence, local colleagues can play a pivotal role in igniting expatriates' sense of competence through positive comments and compliments; recognising practice fuels expatriates' competence via appreciation and praise demonstrated by local colleagues towards expatriates (Marescaux et al., 2013; Spreitzer and Porath, 2014). With respect to relatedness, a "sense of community" should be embedded as a culture in the host workplace. Such community can be crafted in numerous ways, such as celebrating expatriates' birthdays on a regular basis and developing volunteering programs that allow local colleagues to provide social support and consequently fuel expatriates' sense of affiliation, belongingness, and pride (Spreitzer and Porath, 2014). Related to this point, one significant implication should be recalled, which suggested that HCNs should also be provided by cultural sensitivity and awareness training to enlighten their dogmatism about expatriates, obliterate cultural differences related to communication obstacles, and prepare them to be open-minded to deal with expatriates from diverse backgrounds. Thus, HCNs may categorise expatriates as "in-group", from which expatriates obtain tremendous assistance, leading to their success abroad (Varma et al., 2011; Varma, Pichler, Budhwar, and Kupferer, 2012). Aggregately, it is quite important to invest in crafting the host workplace in a way that fulfils relative gratification of the three aspects of self-determination theory, which may pave the way towards thriving (Spreitzer and Porath, 2014).

Fourth, the results provided significant implications for MNCs relocating expatriates to host countries that are institutionally distant from their home countries. In essence, expatriates should be better prepared to navigate ID and maladjustment issues that significantly contributed to understanding their perceptions about their host job attributes. Accordingly, MNCs should invest in pre-departure cross-cultural and ID-based training for expatriates that may dampen subsequent job deprivation perceptions. Numerous advantages can be yielded from such trainings, including: (1) mitigating uncertainty emerging from normative and cultural differences, and enlightening the darkness for expatriates to react positively to these differences (Sims, 2004); (2) trained expatriates are less likely to fall in errors (MaCaughey and Bruning, 2005) and more likely to acquire skills enabling them to develop appropriate behaviours in the host country (Black et al., 1991; Waxim and Panaccio, 2005), and this ultimately reduces uncertainty by gaining legitimacy; (3) providing cultural information about what the relevant and socially acceptable norms and behaviours are in the host country (Moon et al., 2012); (4) facilitating expatriates' adjustment to their work roles and interactions within different cultural context (Osmani-Gani and Rockstuhl, 2009) by psychologically preparing them to tolerate and adapt to the host country's work arrangement, policies, norms, and management styles (Bozionelos, 2009); and (5) when relevant, cross-cultural training can help expatriates to formulate accurate and expectations about their jobs and assignments despite the differences between the home and host country (Caligiuri et al., 2001).

## **7.5. Theoretical Contributions**

The present study has probed several novel and distinctive theory-driven relationships, with emphasis on the antecedents and consequences of the relationship between expatriates' job deprivation and thriving. As predicted in chapter one, drawing on Colquitt and Zapata-Phelan's (2007) typology of contribution toward theory building and testing, this study significantly contributed to expatriate and international management literature in numerous ways:

First, this study built on and extended Ren et al.'s (2015) study by replicating the integration between both self-determination (Ryan and Deci, 2000) and relative deprivation theories (Crosby, 1982) as a fruitful lens for identifying and comprehending the drivers of expatriates' thriving in the host workplace. However, what really made the present study unique from their one is twofold: (1) unlike their social comparison (others referent) approach, the current study adopted the "self-referent" approach that is still under-researched in the relative deprivation and expatriation literature; and (2) it endeavoured to uncover the left-hand side (antecedents) of expatriates' deprivation regarding the three psychological needs (i.e., reasons/factors contributing to expatriates' perceived job deprivation regarding the three basic needs). Besides, it is worth mentioning that it also directly responded to Gagne and Deci's (2005) call that recommended paying increased attention to the empirical examination of the SDT because it received a limited application, particularly in the organisational setting. The results also provided empirical support for some components of the most recent framework towards human sustainability by Spreitzer and Porath (2014), who theoretically proposed the imperative need to gratify the three psychological needs of competence, relatedness, and autonomy to augment thriving.

Second, the present study navigated beyond the tendency to concentrate on expatriates' immutable personality traits and introduced COR theory as a theoretical platform to shed a spotlight on the important role of expatriates' personal dynamic psychological resources (i.e., individual differences) on international assignments. In particular, this study drew attention to expatriates' CC-PsyCap that, to date, received limited attention in the expatriation literature (with exception, Yunlu and Clapp-Smith, 2014; Dollwet and Reichard, 2014). CC-PsyCap was investigated as a boundary condition (moderator) of expatriates' perceived job deprivation-thriving linkage, providing a dual advantage. This identified when job deprivation is more or less likely to influence thriving or how expatriates might react differently and cope with stressful situations based on how much they possess of this caravan of resources. It further addressed an important empirical gap because the meta-analysis conducted by Avey et al. (2011) alluded to a dearth of research on the boundary condition of PsyCap. Furthermore, the direct effect of cross-cultural PsyCap on thriving was examined for the first time in the international setting to explicate whether having positive psychological resources is essential for fostering expatriates' well-being and psychological functioning in the international setting, as is the case in the domestic domain. In this connection, Paterson et al. (2014) suggest that it is meaningful to specify the nature between these two positive work-related constructs to stimulate exploring convergence between positive organisational scholarship (Cameron et al., 2003) and positive organisational behaviour (Luthans, 2002b). In doing so, this contributed to the "socially embedded model of thriving" by Spreitzer et al. (2005) and the "integrative model towards human growth" by Spreitzer and Porath (2014) through introducing personal dynamic attributes as a potential enabler of thriving when transferring their models in the expatriate context.

Third, research on thriving and its outcomes in expatriation context is still in its infancy, and therefore, the present study attempted to fill in this void and contribute to thriving literature by examining some novel significant outcomes: (1) thriving was empirically associated with expatriates' willingness to share tacit-knowledge with local colleagues. Such a novel relationship has not been studied before in either the domestic or international setting. The researcher, interestingly, embraced the "complementary theories" approach that drew on employing multiple theories are used to generate comprehensive insights to explain empirical outcomes (Cairney, 2013). This approach is effective due to the complexity attached with human behaviour that needs to be scrutinised from different angles (Price et al., 2015). For the present study, the results provided ample evidence lending credibility for the effectiveness and relevance of complementing Spreitzer et al.'s (2005) with each of the social capital, social exchange, and prosocial motivation theories in explaining why thriving fostered expatriates' willingness to share tacit-knowledge. From another perspective, this adds to the literature on knowledge sharing by explaining the importance of embedding thriving in the host social work environment as a crucial factor for facilitating knowledge sharing; (2) moving beyond prior expatriate research that conventionally concentrated on withdrawal cognitions (Shaffer and Harrison, 1998; Shaffer et al., 2006; Wang and Takeuchi 2007), assignment completion intention (Kraimer and Wayne, 2004), and actual retention (Ren et al., 2015), the present study shifted attention to a broader positive view to introducing the novel construct "intention to renew current assignment" as an outcome of thriving. The results bolstered that thriving strongly stimulated expatriates' assignment renewal intention to sustain the positive state of thriving; and (3) although the linkage between thriving and performance was theoretically and empirically verified in the domestic setting, it is still important to re-examine this relationship in the international context to ensure congruence with the domestic one. In doing so, this



addressed Ren et al.'s (2015) call urging future researchers to examine performance as an outcome of thriving. The results showed that thriving led to well-performing expatriates.

Fourth, although Ren et al. (2015) raised the researchers' awareness of the job deprivation concept and its relation to thriving, they did not consider the antecedents of this negative construct. Thus, the present study investigated two antecedents of job deprivation, namely ID and adjustment. Despite the increasing uptake and voluminous work exerted in dozens of studies regarding the influence of ID (at the country level) on numerous organisational outcomes of the foreign subsidiaries as noted in the background, there exist a more salient ignorance of the phenomenon (ID) and its outcomes at the individual level. Considering the latter neglected research avenue is quite important because institutionalists, such as North (1990) and Scott (2014), all supported the notion that institutions not only affect organisations but individuals' (e.g., expatriates) attitudes and behaviours as well. Therefore, this study contributed to the literature on ID by examining its direct effect on expatriates' job deprivation with respect to the three needs of relatedness, competence, and autonomy. More particularly, this study benefitted from the use of institutional theory, complemented with P-E fit theory to better understand why/how ID between countries may configure expatriates' psychological feelings of job deprivation with regard to three essential needs of autonomy, competence, and relatedness on their international assignments. The results interestingly captured the differential effects of ID on the three aspects of job deprivation. The second predictor is expatriate adjustment that has been linked for the first time to the three aspects of job deprivation, and such a relationship has been understood utilising the stressor-stress-strain theoretical framework (Harrison et al., 2004). The results revealed that adjustment is a significant negative predictor of job deprivation autonomy and competence. Hence, both

predictors contributed to the self-determination theory literature when applied in the international context by identifying ID and adjustment as novel determinants of the three basic needs' satisfaction/thwarting.

Fifth, in addition to its theoretical contribution, the current study has one significant empirical contribution. As noted from reviewing the literature, the majority of expatriate research considering the theoretical constructs of adjustment, ID, job deprivation, CC-PsyCap, thriving, knowledge sharing, and performance have overwhelmingly been conducted on expatriates in Western and Asian societies. Thus, research on expatriates is still quite limited generally in the peripheral of the Middle East and particularly in Egypt. Accordingly, the present study took the initiative to further widen this ignored avenue and enrich expatriation research by examining the theoretically hypothesised model and collecting data from the unique and hardly accessed cohort of diversified expatriates working in the subsidiaries of foreign companies in Egypt. This also allowed testing Western theories/models and validating their measurements in the largely ignored Egyptian context.

## **7.6. Limitations and Future Research Directions**

Some potential limitations should be outlined and considered in the interpretation of the present study's results. First, a cross-sectional research design was adopted, and all the study's data were collected from one source at the same temporal point. This triggered two concerns. One is associated with the potential existence of the common method bias. However, some procedural (see section 5.6 in chapter 5) and statistical precautions (see section 6.6 in chapter 6) were employed to mitigate and handle this issue. The second concern is related to the causality of the hypothesised model that could not be confidently established, and this, in turn, required cautious interpretation of the findings. Rather, the study captured associations between

variables. Accordingly, to detect causality, future researchers are recommended to conduct longitudinal research design with time-lag (at two different times) and from multiple sources, for example, willingness to share tacit-knowledge could be collected from expatriates' local colleagues, as being receivers of knowledge from the former, performance could be collected from expatriates' supervisors and the remaining variables from expatriates themselves. Related to this point, it is noteworthy to reiterate that a longitudinal study was not possible in the present study due to security reasons that do not allow accessing expatriates more than one time and time and resources constraints.

Second, data were gathered using a combination of convenience and snowball sampling techniques. This, in turn, constrained the generalisability of results only to the collected sample but not to the whole expatriates' community in Egypt. To enhance the external validity of the results, future researchers are urged to re-examine the current study's hypothesised model in other cultural contexts and employ probability sampling techniques (e.g., random sample) if possible.

Third, the study utilised the first and sole measurement scale of ID at the individual level developed and validated by Ramsey (2013). However, this scale had one potential limitation, as being developed for expatriates doing jobs within the short-term assignment context. Although the researcher exerted efforts in conducting some modifications during the pilot study to make the scale fitting expatriates on long term assignments, future research should consider developing and validating a more rigorous and refined subjective ID scale that mainly focus on asking distance questions, along the three pillars, that better correspond to long-term assignments. Related to this point, still also beneficial for future studies to consider two points: (1) subjective ID was applied in the present study with one host country (Egypt) against

multiple expatriates' home country, and therefore, future studies can address either one home country against multiple host countries or multiple homes and host countries; and (2) the potential examination of objective ID by creating composite index for each of the three pillars using Kogut and Singh (1988) formula and then combining them. This may allow for comparing the powerful predictiveness of objective ID<sup>74</sup> (at the country level) vs subjective ID (at the individual level) on individual outcomes (job deprivation). All in all, more research is still needed utilising the institutional theory when researching individuals in MNCs as recommended by recent research (Schotter et al., 2021, p.219) because it is greatly useful “to explore the shifting contours of global work, the different strata of workers that move across national boundaries within and between organizations, and the decision-making process behind it.”

Fourth, some operationalisation-related limitations should also be considered. The present study treated some constructs as multidimensional (second-order) composites, particularly ID, adjustment, and performance, in order not to add more complexity to the hypothesised model, given that the sample was not relatively large. Although this practice was theoretically and statistically justified, it has its limitation. For example, although Ramsey (2015) highlighted that ID as a multidimensional construct had more explanatory power in predicting outcomes than each individual pillar separately, it is still fruitful for future research with larger samples to examine and understand the effect of each individual subdimension of ID on the three aspects

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<sup>74</sup> Some secondary sources (e.g., Global Competitiveness Report) could provide actual scores on some items capturing the regulatory and normative aspects. For the cultural pillar, the scores of either Hofstede or the Globe project cultural dimensions could be obtained. Then, a composite index could be established for each pillar, and then aggregated to create the overall objective ID. However, this suggestion was avoided in the present study because in the cultural pillar, some expatriates' home countries were not included in both Hofstede and the Globe project, and this might lead to losing observations from the dataset.

of job deprivation. This is in alignment with the recommendations of some IB scholars who outlined that although “country context difference” constructs have multidimensional nature and are measurable based on different dimensions, such as institutional arrangements, language, culture, and political systems, researchers are suggested to consider multiple dimensions and investigate the individual effect of each dimension because some of them may be important than others (Jong et al., 2015; Lazarova et al., 2018). The same rationale is recommended for: (1) the subdimensions of adjustment in predicting the three aspects of job deprivation; and (2) the subdimensions of performance as outcomes of thriving.

Fifth, while the present study took the initiative to investigate both ID and adjustment as novel predictors of expatriates’ perceived job deprivation, future research is still significantly required to explore other antecedents to better comprehend the other factors that may affect perceived job deprivation regarding the three psychological needs, such as IHRM practices. For instance, the domestic literature alluded to the importance of some HR practices (job design, performance appraisal, and compensation systems, managerial styles, training, career development, mentoring, developmental appraisal, and empowerment) in satisfying the three basic needs of relatedness, autonomy, and competence (Gagne, 2009; Marescaux et al., 2013). Similarly, it is still quite an important and fruitful future research avenue to identify what IHRM practices that may alleviate the negative perceptions of job deprivation regarding these three basic needs for expatriates in the international setting.

Sixth, the present study theoretically drew on three effective theories (social capital, prosocial motivation, and social exchange theories) in explaining the relationship between expatriates thriving and their willingness to share tacit-knowledge. Such a relationship raised three interesting potential mediators, including relational capital, prosocial motivation, and

reciprocity. However, these mediators have not been fully tested in the model. Therefore, future research should consider examining whether such constructs may serve a mediation role in transmitting the influence of thriving on knowledge sharing intention. This limitation also applies to the relationship between ID and perceived job deprivation, in which P-E fit theoretical assumptions was indirectly utilised to explain this relationship, but without actual testing. Accordingly, it is still quite beneficial for future studies to examine P-E fit as a mediator because this may add a further explanation and improve the understanding of the nature of ID-job deprivation linkage.

Seventh, the present study only focused on thriving at workplace, with three important outcomes, including knowledge sharing intention, assignment renewal intention, and performance (i.e., task and contextual). Very liminal attention was devoted to thriving outside the work setting or the interrelation between both domains. That is, thriving at work may either spark expatriates' energy to be extended to meaningful execution of non-work activities outside work or fully drain their energy at work and leave limited space for external non-work activities, causing family disruptions (Porath et al., 2012). This raised potential fruitful future research points: do expatriates' thriving at work have spillover on their thriving outside work? Is thriving related to expatriates' work-family balance (WFB)? Also, future studies should investigate other potential outcomes, such as expatriates' innovative behaviours, career adaptability, health, creative performance, career advancement, organisational commitment, job satisfaction, organisational citizenship behaviour (OCB), and burnout.

Eighth, previous research reported that thriving is dynamic and varies across time and contexts (Niessen et al., 2012; Porath et al., 2012), and adjustment evolves over time (Firth et al., 2014). Although the dynamic nature of the previous two constructs was carefully considered in the

timing of data collection as mentioned previously, it entailed recalling Ren and her colleagues' (2015) recommendations stimulating future researchers to investigate the temporal relationship between both constructs using a longitudinal study to explain, for example, how levels of thriving may fluctuate in the different phases of adjustment (“honeymoon, culture shock, adjustment, and mastery”) (Torbiorn, 1982).

Ninth, the present study focused only on the role of expatriates' CC-PsyCap as a relatively ignored dynamic personal trait, and unfortunately, its moderating effect was not confirmed. Future researchers should continue replicating this positive construct and link it to expatriate thriving because, as a measurement, it has not received enough validation in the international domain (see only Clapp-Smith, 2009; Yunlu and Clapp-Smith, 2014). Simultaneously, they can investigate other individual attributes as moderators, such as the immutable big five personality traits (Barrick and Mount, 1991). This may open a fruitful comparative avenue to identify whether stable traits are more important and effective in buffering the negative job deprivation-thriving link than dynamic traits and vice versa and whether stable traits are stronger drivers of expatriates' thriving than dynamic traits or not.

Tenth, the present study was purely quantitative and focused on testing numerous theoretically based hypothesised relationships through survey data. However, quantitative methods are detracted from being a “narrow-angle lens” because of the extensive concentration on some causal factors simultaneously (Antwi and Hamza, 2015). Future studies can consider concurrent triangulation design that simultaneously combines both quantitative and qualitative data to understand the same phenomena in more depth, with the latter being collected by interviews. Then, the triangulated data are interpreted at the same time to ensure convergence and cross-validation (Cameron, 2009; Hanson et al., 2005). Also, qualitative data can be useful

to provide significant contextual information to better comprehend quantitative findings (Bryman and Bell, 2015). Thus, qualitative data could help to interpret why some relationships (e.g., ID and job deprivation-competence – adjustment and job deprivation-relatedness) were not significant in the present study, leading to theory advancement.

Eleventh, the present study relied on the self-comparison approach to capture job deprivation regarding the three needs by asking expatriates to subjectively self-compare whether their jobs' needs were fulfilled in Egypt more than their home country or not, taking into account reverse coding the questions to capture deprivation. Future studies may operationalise job deprivation using a different method drawing on the theory of met expectations that assumes that “the more congruent an individual's expectations are with the individual's reality once on the job, the greater the individual's satisfaction” (Porter and Steers, 1973; cited in Caligiuri et al., 2001, p.359). This method requires future researchers to ask expatriates two sets of parallel questions on the 3 dimensions (autonomy, competence, and relatedness). For example, on the autonomy dimension, the first set asks the expatriate: Expectations before your current assignment job: to what extent did you expect your job in Egypt will allow you more autonomy than your previous job before assignment at the home country? The second set will ask: Now, you are in Egypt, does the job allow you more autonomy than your previous job as expected? Then, each parallel “before assignment” item would be subtracted from the ‘on assignment’ corresponding item to create the expectation index. If expectations are not met, deprivation may increase and vice versa. This method is more likely to provide a more accurate or objective measurement of job deprivation.



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## **Appendices**

### **Appendix A: Method of Review**

For the purpose of searching articles addressing the main concepts of this study, two steps were employed following IB scholars as mentioned earlier in chapter 2. First, some databases that are popular with high-quality publications in the fields of international business, organisational behaviour, and organisational psychology were searched and screened out using numerous keywords for each construct/concept. These databases are Science Direct, Emerald, Ebsco, Springer, Sage, and Wiley through utilising the University of Essex library databases as well as google scholar. The keywords used in this search process for each construct/concept are shown in the table below. Admittedly, these keywords might not be overarching, and this search process might not have competently covered all the articles related to each construct/concept because some articles were excluded due to their irrelevance, some articles were not available in the database, and others might be overlooked due to human error. Second, a large patch of articles related to each construct/concept was downloaded and inspected for relevance to the current study's topic. Given the time, resources, and PhD word count constraints and after trying my best, a final patch of relevant articles related to each construct/concept published in English in high-quality management, business, and psychology journals and edited books were identified and kept for review after precisely assessing and confirming their relevance. However, noteworthy to mention that my search process might not be comprehensive for all the articles related to each construct/concept because some articles might be omitted due to human error or were not available in the database. Nonetheless, to the best of my knowledge, this final set of articles captured the majority of the key papers that are deemed relevant to my research topic to date. This, in turn, enabled me to delineate and analyse what has been searched in the literature and identify knowledge gaps. A generic summary of the number of articles/edited books and keywords of search are shown in the table below:

A generic summary of the number of articles/edited books and keywords of the search

Concept	Keywords used in search	Remarks
ID	Consequences of ID, ID and expatriates' outcomes in MNCs in Egypt, ID and MNC's decisions in Egypt, ID and expatriates' attitudes/behaviours, ID and MNC's outcomes, legitimacy-seeking and expatriates' outcomes, ID, liability of foreignness and expatriates' outcomes, ID and job deprivation, and ID and basic needs satisfaction	
Expatriate Adjustment	Determinants and consequences of expatriates' adjustment in Egypt, antecedent and outcomes of expatriates' adjustment, outcomes/consequences of expatriates' adjustment, expatriate adjustment and job deprivation, expatriate adjustment and basic needs satisfaction	Although this study focuses on the outcome (i.e., job deprivation) of adjustment, the search process included both the antecedent and outcomes to capture the majority of examined outcomes of adjustment. However, for the downloaded articles with both aspects, the review will be limited to the findings related to adjustment outcomes for comparative purposes
Job Deprivation and the two integrated theories of relative deprivation and self-determination	<b>For relative deprivation</b> , the keywords included: predictors and consequences of relative deprivation (resentment and discontent), antecedents and outcomes of expatriate job deprivation, deprivation (resentment and discontent) and workplace outcomes in Egypt, disadvantageous and unfavourable self-comparisons impact on work outcomes, and self-reference and work outcomes. <b>For self-determination theory</b> , the keywords included: determinants and outcomes of basic needs satisfaction, applications of SDT in the organisational context, expatriates' basic needs satisfaction, and antecedents and consequences of SDT basic needs satisfaction.	RD studies in the medical discipline were excluded
Thriving	Expatriate thriving in Egypt, expatriate thriving and work-related outcomes, antecedents/predictors of thriving at workplace, outcomes/consequences of thriving	The articles that considered only one of the two dimensions of thriving (either vitality or learning) were ruled out because, as noted earlier, that both components jointly reflect the content of thriving.
Cross-cultural PsyCap	Antecedents and consequences of expatriate cross-cultural PsyCap in Egypt, determinants and outcomes of PsyCap in Egypt	Articles that considered the topic of collective PsyCap were ruled out because this study focuses on PsyCap at the individual level
Willingness to share tacit knowledge	Expatriates' knowledge sharing intention in Egypt, determinants of tacit knowledge sharing/transfer in MNCs, factors facilitating	Articles that considered reverse knowledge transfer from the host to the home country were excluded because the current study focus is on the knowledge

	expatriate knowledge sharing willingness, antecedents/predictors of organisational knowledge sharing/transfer intention	shared by expatriates to local employees in the host country Egypt
Willingness to renew the current assignment	Expatriate current assignment renewal intention, expatriate premature repatriation intentions, expatriate withdrawal intentions, expatriate early return intentions, expatriate current assignment completion intention	Due to the construct novelty, the researcher drew on reviewing the extant literature related to withdrawal from assignments and assignment completion intention to conceptualise this concept
Expatriate Performance	Expatriate performance in Egypt, expatriate effectiveness, expatriate work-related outcomes, and antecedents/predictors of expatriate performance	All the articles considered the topic of expatriate performance management systems and practices, generic expatriate themes, and expatriate impact on organisational performance were ruled out because they were deemed as inappropriate and inconsistent with the research purposes.

The sources used in the review included textbooks, handbooks, and journal articles.

## Appendix B: Ethical Approval



University of Essex

### Application for Ethical Approval of Research Involving Human Participants

This application form must be completed for any research involving human participants conducted in or by the University. 'Human participants' are defined as including living human beings, human beings who have recently died (cadavers, human remains and body parts), embryos and foetuses, human tissue and bodily fluids, and human data and records (such as, but not restricted to medical, genetic, financial, personnel, criminal or administrative records and test results including scholastic achievements). Research must not commence until written approval has been received (from departmental Director of Research/Ethics Officer, Faculty Ethics Sub-Committee (ESC) or the University's Ethics Committee). This should be borne in mind when setting a start date for the project. Ethical approval cannot be granted retrospectively and failure to obtain ethical approval prior to data collection will mean that these data cannot be used.

Applications must be made on this form, and submitted electronically, to your departmental Director of Research/Ethics Officer. A signed copy of the form should also be submitted. Applications will be assessed by the Director of Research/Ethics Officer in the first instance, and may then passed to the ESC, and then to the University's Ethics Committee. A copy of your research proposal and any necessary supporting documentation (e.g. consent form, recruiting materials, etc) should also be attached to this form.

A full copy of the signed application will be retained by the department/school for 6 years following completion of the project. The signed application form cover sheet (two pages) will be sent to the Research Governance and Planning Manager in the REO as Secretary of the University's Ethics Committee.

1. Title of project:  
Expatriate Job Deprivation and Thriving at Workplace: The Role of Institutional Distance and Cross-cultural Psychological Capital

2. The title of your project will be published in the minutes of the University Ethics Committee. If you object, then a reference number will be used in place of the title.  
Do you object to the title of your project being published? Yes  / No

3. This Project is:  Staff Research Project  Student Project

4. Principal Investigator(s) (students should also include the name of their supervisor):

Name:	Department:
Mohamed Samir Ali Shaaban	PhD Student at Essex Business School
Prof. Geoffrey Wood (Supervisor)	Dean of Essex Business School
Dr Caleb Kwong (Supervisor)	Essex Business School
Dr Young Ah-Kim (Supervisor)	Essex Business School

5. Proposed start date: 1/March/2019

6. Probable duration: 1 Year

7. Will this project be externally funded? Yes  / No   
If Yes,


8. What is the source of the funding?



9. If external approval for this research has been given, then only this cover sheet needs to be submitted  
External ethics approval obtained (attach evidence of approval) Yes  / No

**Declaration of Principal Investigator:**

The information contained in this application, including any accompanying information, is, to the best of my knowledge, complete and correct. I/we have read the University's *Guidelines for Ethical Approval of Research Involving Human Participants* and accept responsibility for the conduct of the procedures set out in this application in accordance with the guidelines, the University's *Statement on Safeguarding Good Scientific Practice* and any other conditions laid down by the University's Ethics Committee. I/we have attempted to identify all risks related to the research that may arise in conducting this research and acknowledge my/our obligations and the rights of the participants.

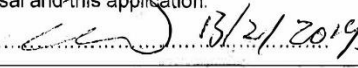
Signature(s): Mohamed Samir Ali Shaaban 

Name(s) in block capitals: MOHAMED SAMIR ALI SHAABAN

Date: 13/February/2019

**Supervisor's recommendation (Student Projects only):**

I have read and approved the quality of both the research proposal and this application.

Supervisor's signature: Prof. Geoffrey Wood  13/2/2019

**Outcome:**

The departmental Director of Research (DoR) / Ethics Officer (EO) has reviewed this project and considers the methodological/technical aspects of the proposal to be appropriate to the tasks proposed. The DoR / EO considers that the investigator(s) has/have the necessary qualifications, experience and facilities to conduct the research set out in this application, and to deal with any emergencies and contingencies that may arise.

This application falls under Annex B and is approved on behalf of the ESC

This application is referred to the ESC because it does not fall under Annex B

This application is referred to the ESC because it requires independent scrutiny

Signature(s): 

Name(s) in block capitals: DR MARIA HUDSON

Department: ESSEX BUSNISS SCHOOL

Date: 20/02/2019

The application has been approved by the ESC

The application has not been approved by the ESC

The application is referred to the University Ethics Committee

Signature(s):

Name(s) in block capitals:

Faculty:

Date:

## Appendix C: Invitation Letters, Consent Form, and Questionnaire



University of Essex

ESSEX  
BUSINESS  
SCHOOL

### HR Invitation Letter

Dear HR Director,

My name is Mohamed Samir Ali Shaaban. I am currently a PhD student at the Essex Business School, The University of Essex, UK. I am currently carrying out a piece of research entitled: "Expatriate Job Deprivation and Thriving at Workplace: The Role of Institutional Distance and Cross-cultural Psychological Capital". This research is conducted under the supervision of Prof. Geoffrey Wood, Dr Caleb Kwong, and Dr Young Ah-Kim

The purpose of this research is to investigate the relationship between expatriate's perceptions of job deprivation and thriving at work, with consideration to the influence of perceptions of institutional distance and cultural psychological capital.

The study kindly requires the participation of the expatriates (**i.e. non-Egyptians**) working at your organization/company in an online questionnaire that will take roughly 15 minutes to complete. Therefore, I should be very grateful if you accepted circulating the survey's link and participants' (i.e., expatriates) information sheet among your expatriates. Please note that the survey's link includes the expatriates' consent form, invitation letter, and questionnaire questions.

This data collection via online survey has received ethical approval from the University of Essex Business School. Thus, please kindly note that your expatriates' participation is voluntary and their participation in this research should not influence their employment status. All the expatriates' responses are completely anonymous, and confidentiality is maintained at all times. No personal information, such as the expatriate's name or the name of your organization, will be asked for at any point in this survey.

All information collected will be kept securely and will only be accessible by myself or my supervisors. However, this research forms part of my studies at the University of Essex and therefore may be subject to scrutiny by other University staff in determining the outcome of my degree.

We would be very grateful for your participation in this study. If you need to contact us in the future, please contact me ([ms16746@essex.ac.uk](mailto:ms16746@essex.ac.uk)) or my supervisory panel: Prof Geoffrey Wood ([gtwood@essex.ac.uk](mailto:gtwood@essex.ac.uk)), Dr Caleb Kwong ([ckwong@essex.ac.uk](mailto:ckwong@essex.ac.uk)), Dr Young Ah-Kim ([yakim@essex.ac.uk](mailto:yakim@essex.ac.uk)).

You are welcome to ask questions at any point. We are extremely conscious of your valuable time, but your participation and support will be highly appreciated.

Yours,

Mohamed Shaaban

Graduate Teaching Assistant

PhD Student in management

Essex Business School

University of Essex

United Kingdom

Email: [ms16746@essex.ac.uk](mailto:ms16746@essex.ac.uk)

## Participant Information Sheet

Dear Participant,

The purpose of this research is to investigate the relationship between expatriate’s perceptions of job deprivation and thriving at work, with consideration to the influence of perceptions of institutional distance and cultural psychological capital. There is a paucity of knowledge about expatriates’ (**i.e., non-Egyptians**) experiences in Egypt. Therefore, I should be very grateful if you accepted to help us in this research through your participation in completing this online survey. The survey will include some structured questions that are expected to be completed within 15 minutes. This data collection via survey has received ethical approval from the University of Essex Business School.

Please kindly note that your participation is voluntary, and you can withdraw at any time. **All responses are completely anonymous, and confidentiality is maintained at all times.** No personal information, such as your name or the name of the organisation (employer), will be asked for at any point in this survey, but you may be asked to provide some demographic information (e.g., age, gender, experience, etc.) for analysis purposes. Data collected through this questionnaire will be aggregated and you will not be individually identifiable in any reports or publications from this research. **Therefore, please answer what you really feel and to the best of your knowledge, as there is no right or wrong answer.**

If you look forward to receiving a copy of the final results, you can request it directly through contacting the researcher via email shown below.

We are extremely conscious of your valuable time, but your participation and support will be highly appreciated. For any further information, you can directly contact the researcher or the supervisor via emails shown below.

Thank you very much for your participation in this survey.

Yours Sincerely

Researcher	Supervisors and Contact details	
Mohamed Shaaban Graduate Teaching Assistant PhD Student in Management Essex Business School University of Essex United Kingdom Email: <a href="mailto:ms16746@essex.ac.uk">ms16746@essex.ac.uk</a>	Prof Geoffrey Wood	<a href="mailto:gtwood@essex.ac.uk">gtwood@essex.ac.uk</a>
	Dean of Essex Business School	
	Dr Caleb Kwong Reader of Management Science	<a href="mailto:ckwong@essex.ac.uk">ckwong@essex.ac.uk</a>
	Dr Young Ah-Kim Lecturer of Management Science	<a href="mailto:yakim@essex.ac.uk">yakim@essex.ac.uk</a>

## **Expatriate Job Deprivation and Thriving at Workplace: The Impact of Institutional Distance and Cross-cultural Psychological Capital**

Dear participant,

This questionnaire seeks to investigate a set of relationships between: (1) institutional distance between Egypt and expatriate's home country and expatriate's job deprivation; (2) adjustment and expatriate job deprivation; (3) expatriate job deprivation and thriving at workplace; (4) the moderating role of cross-cultural psychological capital in the relationship between expatriate job deprivation and thriving; (5) cross-cultural psychological capital and thriving at workplace; (6) expatriate thriving and willingness to share knowledge with local employees; (7) expatriate thriving and intention to renew current international assignment in Egypt; and (8) expatriate thriving and performance.

This research is being carried out by Mohamed Shaaban under the supervisory team composed of:

(1) Professor Geoffrey Wood  
Dean of Essex Business School  
Professor of International Business  
University of Essex  
Email: [gtwood@essex.ac.uk](mailto:gtwood@essex.ac.uk)

(2) Dr Caleb Kwong  
Reader of Management Science  
Essex Business School  
University of Essex  
Email: [ckwong@essex.ac.uk](mailto:ckwong@essex.ac.uk)

(3) Dr Young-Ah Kim  
Lecturer of Management Science  
Essex Business School  
University of Essex  
Email: [yakim@essex.ac.uk](mailto:yakim@essex.ac.uk)

You will not be asked to provide your name or the name of your organisation, but you may be asked to provide some demographic information for analysis purposes. Data collected through this questionnaire will be aggregated and you will not be individually identifiable in any reports or publications from this research. All information collected will be kept securely and will only be accessible by myself and my supervisors. However, other members of the university may be granted permission to view data if required for the purpose of legitimate university procedures and at the discretion of the supervisor and the ethics officer.

We would be very grateful for your participation in this study. If you need to contact us in the future, please contact me ([ms16746@essex.ac.uk](mailto:ms16746@essex.ac.uk)) or my supervisors contact details mentioned above. You can also contact us in writing at: EBS, University of Essex, Colchester CO4 3SQ.

Yours,  
Mohamed Shaaban

**Statement of Consent**

Do you agree to participate in this research project? Please choose:

Yes  No

By returning a completed version of this questionnaire, I consent to the following<sup>75</sup>:

- I agree to participate in the research project, “Expatriate Job Deprivation and Thriving at Workplace: The Role of Institutional Distance and Cross-cultural Psychological Capital”, being carried out by Mohamed Shaaban.
- This agreement has been given voluntarily and without coercion.
- I have been given full information about the study and contact details of the researcher(s).
- I have read and understood the information provided above
- I have had the opportunity to ask questions about the research and my participation in it.

Before proceeding with the main questionnaire, please answer the following preliminary questions:

Are you currently working in a full-time job in Egypt?

Yes  No

Is your organisation in Egypt operating in the diplomatic field (e.g., embassy)?

Yes  No

Do you hold the Egyptian nationality, along with your original nationality (e.g., Egyptian with American nationality)?

Yes  No

When did you start your current job in Egypt?

Less than 6 months ago  More than 6 months ago

Do you have a previous work/professional experience at your home country before?

Yes  No

---

<sup>75</sup> For the online questionnaire form, consent was obtained by saying, by clicking the “Next” button, I consent to the following

**Section 1:** Please describe **to what extent you perceive Egypt as similar or different to that of your home country on the following items:** 1) Very similar, 2) somewhat similar, 3) neutral, 4) somewhat different, and 5) very different. **Compared to my home country, in Egypt ...**

Statements	1	2	3	4	5
Amount of bureaucracy and red tape that exists in the country					
People stay at the office after official office hours					
Attitudes towards working relationships					
Enforcement of laws and rules					
Willingness to put in overtime					
Attitude towards new ideas					
Immigration procedures					
Expected hours of work per week on the job					
Communication styles adopted					
Policies regarding gift acceptance from business associates					
Expected quality of work					
Firm loyalty					
Immunization requirements					
Expected turnaround time for a piece of work given					
Status signals: auto, dress, mannerisms, etc					

**Section 2:** Please **compare** your current job position in **Egypt to your previous job** position at **your home country** according to the following items on the scale (1 = strongly disagree, 2 = disagree, 3 = neither agree nor disagree, 4 = agree, 5 = strongly agree). **Compared to my previous home job, in Egypt ...**

Statements	1	2	3	4	5
The job allows me more freedom to decide on my own how to do my work					
I don't really feel more connected with local colleagues at my job					

I don't really feel more competent in my job					
The job allows me more responsibility to make a lot of decisions on my own					
I don't really mix more with local colleagues at my job					
I really feel more mastering my tasks at my job					
The job allows me more autonomy to decide about how to schedule my work					
I feel more alone when I am with my local colleagues					
I feel more competent at my job					
The job allows me more freedom to plan how I do my work					
In the Egyptian workplace, I feel more part of a group					
I am more doubted whether I am able to execute my job properly					
The job allows me less opportunity to decide what methods I use to complete my work					
I have more local (Egyptian) colleagues who are close friends of mine					
I am better at the things I do in my job					

**Section 3:** Below are some statements regarding your experiences **at the Egyptian workplace.**

Please indicate to what extent you agree or disagree with the following items according to the following 1-5 Likert scale:

Statements	1 Strongly Disagree	2 Disagree	3 Neither Agree nor Disagree	4 Agree	5 Strongly Agree
I feel alive and vital					
I find myself learning often					
I have energy and spirit					
I continue to learn more and more as time goes by					

I do not feel very energetic					
I see myself continually improving					
I feel alert and awake					
I am not learning					
I am looking forward to each new day					
I have developed a lot as a person					

**Section 4:** Below are some statements describing how you think about yourself right now. Please indicate to what extent you agree or disagree with the following items according to the following 1-6 Likert scale (1 = strongly disagree, 2 = disagree, 3 = somewhat disagree, 4 = somewhat agree, 5 = agree, 6 = strongly agree).

Statements	1	2	3	4	5	6
There are lots of ways around any problem that I face when in another culture						
I feel confident that I can find my way around in a culture other than my own						
Even when things are tough, I can perform quite well in other cultures						
I always look on the bright side of things regarding what I experience in other cultures						
Right now I see myself as being pretty successful when I'm in another culture.						
I feel confident analyzing an unfamiliar culture to understand how I should behave						
I usually manage difficulties one way or another when in another culture.						
I'm optimistic about what will happen to me in the future as it pertains to interacting with people from cultures other than my own						
I can think of many ways to reach my goals when I'm a different culture						



I feel confident contributing to discussions about issues when I'm interacting with people from other cultures						
I can be "on my own" so to speak in another culture if I have to						
When interacting with people from a different culture, and things are uncertain, I usually expect the best						
When in another culture, I think that I can obtain goals that are important to me						
I am confident that I can perform effectively on many different tasks even in other cultures						
I can get through difficult times in another culture because I've experienced difficulty before						
I approach being in other cultures as if "things will turn out for the best"						

**Section 5:** Below are some statements regarding your intended behaviors and plan during your current assignment in Egypt. Please indicate to what extent you agree or disagree with the following items according to the following 1-5 Likert scale (1 = strongly disagree, 2 = disagree, 3 = neither agree nor disagree, 4 = agree, 5 = strongly agree):

Statements	1	2	3	4	5
I am seriously considering renewing my current expatriate assignment again					
I intend to share my ideas with local team members as much as possible					
I intend to share my experience or know-how from work with other local colleagues as much as possible					
I intend to stay for another similar period of my current expatriate assignment					
I will provide my know-where or know-whom at the request of other local colleagues as much as possible					

Most likely, I will request a return to my home country after completing my current assignment					
I will try to share my expertise from my education or training with other local colleagues as much as possible					

**Section 6:** Please indicate to what extent to do agree or disagree with the following statements regarding your experience of adjustment in Egypt according to the following 1-5 Likert scale (1 = very unadjusted, 2 = unadjusted, 3 = neutral, 4 = adjusted, and 5 = very adjusted):

Statements	1	2	3	4	5
Housing conditions					
Interacting with host country nationals outside work					
Performance standards					
Local food					
Shopping					
Working with host country nationals					
Job requirements					
Cost of living					
Entertainment					
Interacting with host country nationals daily					
Supervisory responsibilities					
Health care					
Living conditions					
Speaking with host country nationals					

**Section 7:** Please rate your performance on the following dimensions of your current international assignment in Egypt according to the following 1-5 Likert scale (1 = very poor, 2 = poor, 3 = average, 4 = well, 5 = outstanding). Please recall your most recent actual performance evaluation in your current assignment:

Statements	1	2	3	4	5
Overall effectiveness in the current global assignment					
Developing and maintaining good professional relationships abroad					
Carrying out task requirements in this role					
Communicating with colleagues in the host country					
Achieving job objectives during the global assignment					
Leading others/demonstrating effective leadership behaviors					

### Section 8: Respondents' Demographic Profile

Please select the appropriate item for each of the following questions

1. Age

- 20-29     
 30-39     
 40-49     
 50-60     
 over 60

2. Gender

- Male                     
 Female

3. Relationship Status

- Single                     
 In a committed relationship/Married

If you are in a committed relationship or married, is your family accompanying you in Egypt?

- Yes                     
 No

4. Nationality .....

5. Type of Expatriation

- Self-initiated (i.e., your own decision)  
 organizationally supported (i.e., requested by your home country)

6. Hierarchical Job Level

- Clerical staff (e.g., administrative assistant/staff, secretary, and receptionist)
- Lower level management (e.g., supervisors and team leader)
- Middle level management (e.g., head of department, director, project manager)
- Higher level management (e.g., president, vice president, CEO, CFO, and General Manager)

7. What is the highest degree or level of school/ higher education you have completed? If currently enrolled, mark the previous grade or highest degree received.

- High school diploma or below
- Primary degree (e.g. Bachelor's degree).
- Master's degree (for example: MSc, MBA).
- Doctorate degree (for example: PhD, EdD).

8. Please indicate your proficiency of the Egyptian language:

- None       Basic       Conversational       Fluent

9. Before departure from your home country, did you receive any kind of cross-cultural training?

- No                       Yes

10. After your arrival to Egypt, did you receive any kind of cross-cultural training?

- No                       Yes

11. So far, how long have you been on your current international assignment in Egypt?

..... (Years)                      ..... (Months).

12. Do you have **any previous international work experiences in other countries** (not including the current one in Egypt)?

Yes  No

If yes, what is the total duration of your previous international assignments?

..... (Years) ..... (Months).

13. Do you have **any previous work experiences particularly in Egypt in the past**?

Yes  No

If yes, what is the total duration of your previous work experience in Egypt in the past?

..... (Years) ..... (Months).

14. Organization Type

- Banking/Finance  Manufacturing  Oil  Education  
 Hospitality  Pharmaceutical  others (please specify ....)

Thank you for your participation in this study “Expatriate Job Deprivation and Thriving at Workplace: The Role of Institutional Distance and Cross-cultural Psychological Capital”

You are reminded that by submitting a completed version of this questionnaire you are agreeing to participate in this research.

If you have any queries, please contact me ([ms16746@essex.ac.uk](mailto:ms16746@essex.ac.uk)) or my supervisory panel via their aforementioned emails aforementioned. You can also contact us in writing at: EBS, University of Essex, Colchester CO4 3SQ.

Yours,  
Mohamed Shaaban

## **Appendix D: Data Collection Procedures**

First, prior to starting the actual data collection, the researcher followed the empirical research regulations established by the University of Essex by submitting an ethical approval application with attachments that involved a questionnaire and covering letter. The ethical approval was granted on 20/Feb/2019 to start data collection 1<sup>st</sup>/March/2019.

Second, similarly, the researcher followed the regulations imposed by the Egyptian government before conducting any empirical research (Hatem, 1994). Accordingly, a security approval application was submitted to the Central Agency for Public Mobilisation and Statistics (CAPMAS). The normal period for getting this security approval is 3 months (Hatem, 1994). Surprisingly, the researcher has been granted approval after two weeks and got the letter of approval and the ten pages of the questionnaire with the CAPMAS stamp on 17/April/2019, with no suggestion to remove any of the questionnaire's items. The purpose of this security approval is to strictly check the questionnaire's questions and ensure that it did not include any questions triggering any potential problem, especially for their foreign expatriates taking part in the study. This step was one of the major challenges normally encountered by researchers in Egypt. The CAPMAS approval letter was quite an essential document, as it not only permitted access to the target foreign companies/organisations but also asked their gatekeepers to help me facilitate my collection of required data from expatriates.

Third, after securing both the ethical and security approvals, the researcher started utilising the previously mentioned available sampling frames to get the foreign companies' contact details (e.g., phone number, address, email, and websites). The websites of the selected companies/organisations were visited to verify contact details and confirm the accuracy of phone numbers and emails. Surprisingly, some of these selected bodies were found to publicise the personal contact details of their expatriates. Accordingly, a well-detailed email, including survey link and approvals, was sent either directly to expatriates via their personal who were personally invited for participation emails or to HR/Administrative managers who were kindly requested to circulate survey's link among expatriates working in their companies/organisations.

Fourth, the researcher also utilised his social relational networks, including friends, neighbours, and prior graduate colleagues who already work in foreign organisations with expatriates in numerous sections. This social network played a pivotal role in facilitating conducting field visits and arranging meetings with the HR/administrative managers. In these meetings, the researcher clarified the nature of research and its objectives, along with showing them all the granted approvals. Also, the researcher discussed the questionnaire's items with them and confirmed the anonymity and confidentiality of the collected data. Several managers displayed their interest and approved participation in my research. Consequently, some managers approved the notion of e-survey link and internal circulation among expatriate staff who are asked by the formers to fill in the questionnaire. Whilst, other managers approved distributing the paper and pencil questionnaires, rather than the e-version. However, some few managers declined the participation for different reasons, such as privacy of data, concern that their participation and research publication may affect the relationship between them and local Egyptian partners, and expatriates are busily working in the oil fields in the western desert and may not have time for taking part in the study.

Fifth, follow-up emails and phone calls were sent/conducted from one time to another with contacted managers or individual participants of expatriates to kindly remind them of the progress in completing the questionnaire. For the companies/organisations that approved hard copy questionnaires, it has been agreed that the HR/administrative manager will contact the researcher either by phone or email when the completed hard copies questionnaires are readily available for collection. Based on expatriates' availability and time flexibility, especially because the data collection was undertaken in the summer season when some expatriates were on their annual leave, the agreed waiting time to get the questionnaire filled and ready for collection ranged from 2-6 weeks. Based on managers' time availability, the researcher visited them on the agreed dates/times to collect the filled questionnaires. According to the agreed dates/times with the managers, the researcher visited them to collect the filled questionnaires.

Sixth, accessing expatriates was not only confined to contacting them officially through their organisational gatekeepers but also through approaching them in their social events organised by the "Inter-Nations" platform. Inter-Nations is an internationally widely spread organisation that seeks to "create a great experience and a trusted community where expatriates feel at home

around the world” (Inter-nations, 2020). Accordingly, I signed up an account on their platform on which he could contact the ambassador of the expatriate community in Cairo and asked her for help through whether I can be allowed to attend expatriates’ social events and negotiate survey dissemination among expatriates. The ambassador replied to my message and asked me to initially send her the questionnaire and approvals by email to check them before deciding on my request. Afterwards, she conducted a phone call with me confirming that she had no issues with the questionnaire, and she was very pleased and enthusiastic to help me. Accordingly, she invited me to physically attend two formal events comprising large numbers of expatriates working in Egypt. In these events, based on my discussion with her regarding the criteria of selecting expatriates to fit my research, she guided and introduced me to the appropriate expatriates and asked them to help me. This gave me a chance to have some social chat with expatriates, speak about my research, and ask whether they mind helping me via completing my questionnaire. Numerous expatriates demonstrated good and kind intentions to fill in my questionnaire. They provided me with their contact details (emails) via their business card and asked me to send them the survey link to fill it in. Noteworthy to highlight that the Inter-nations experience not only assisted me to increase the number of responses but enriched my social network with expatriates as well.

Seventh, the researcher utilised this newly established network with expatriates in implementing the snowball technique by asking them to nominate other potential participants within their expatriates’ community at work who fit my research criteria and invite them for participation.

Finally, the data gathering process ended up with collecting 313 complete responses at the beginning of October/2019. When referring these responses to the rules of thumb discussed in the previous stage 4, it revealed that 313 responses achieved the sample size requirements for conducting/running structural equation modelling.



# Appendix E: AMOS SEM

