



2 Acting in the spirit of the whole: Expatriate careers between the poles of personal intentions and of company and country policies

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Expatriation has received a lot of research attention over the years due to the importance of expatriates to organizations as well as extensive impacts such international work experience has on expatriates themselves. To generate a better understanding about expatriation, it is essential to understand things in context, as "Every event and everything must come into being as a result of causes and conditions." (Dalai Lama, 1998). In this chapter we discuss four topics areas that we see as important issues in the international careers of expatriates and that have been studied within the GLOMO project. We also connect the themes of the following chapters with these four areas and briefly introduce the chapters.

First, we discuss expatriates' career paths, the career capital they develop abroad and thus may be able to utilize afterwards, and the impacts of expatriation on the longer-term career success of individuals. Second, expatriates' identities, well-being and embeddedness are discussed. Third, we introduce some key global mobility management challenges that companies face when managing expatriation. Finally, the role of the host country in expatriation is discussed as an additional theme that has received less attention in earlier research.

PART II: EXPATRIATES' CAREER PATHS, CAPITAL, AND SUCCESS

Part II of the book deals with expatriates' careers. Expatriate careers are also seen to be prototypes of boundaryless careers in which individuals need to manage their own careers as they move across national and often also across organizational and industry borders (Andresen et al., 2020a; Dickmann et al., 2018). In particular, self-initiated expatriates (SIEs) have taken a lead on their own careers when they have searched for a job abroad on their own initiative (Suutari et al., 2018). Similarly, they need to navigate through their repatriation process on their own when/if repatriating back to their home country (Andresen, 2021). While assigned expatriates (AEs) may get some support for their career moves from the employer organization, also they often report poor repatriation management (Tams & Arthur, 2010). As an outcome, they often make new career moves on their own initiative to improve their career situation (Andresen & Biemann, 2013). Often this means leaving the organization or at least seriously considering job options outside the organization (Suutari & Brewster, 2003).

While it has been argued that the importance of social capital increases with the extent of boundarylessness (Sturges et al., 2000), empirical evidence in the international setting is still fairly limited (Mäkelä & Suutari, 2009). Existing studies indicate that expatriates develop extensive networks (Antal, 2000; Mäkelä,

2007). Such networks are very important in the international boundaryless career context as these networks offer many benefits such as access to information and career opportunities (Andresen, 2021; Mäkelä & Suutari, 2009). In Chapter 3, *Inés Escobar Borrueal* explores such individual and organizational benefits that can be derived from the social capital of both assigned and self-initiated repatriates. Besides providing a review of the extant literature on this topic, she presents key findings from 25 interviews with repatriates and HR experts. The findings provide new evidence that repatriates' social capital may enhance career success and the well-being of individuals as well as performance and knowledge transfers.

Global mobility is also found to be a highly developmental and transitional experience for expatriates (Andresen et al., 2015; Dickmann et al., 2018; Shaffer et al., 2012). Thus, an international relocation involves a need to adjust expatriate thought patterns and scripts to effectively interact with people and adapt to situational demands across cultures (Shaffer et al., 2012). Expatriates also often have demanding jobs with a high level of autonomy and thus, expatriation often has an extensive impact on individuals' careers (Andresen et al., 2022; Mello et al., 2022). One of the frameworks that is used to understand the development that takes place abroad is the career capital framework (Sullivan & Arthur, 2006). This framework is applied in two subprojects within the GLOMO project. First, in Chapter 4 by *Emilija Oleškevičiūtė* the career capital framework is applied to explore the way these different types of knowing affect the international transfer of career capital. She does this by bringing real life examples from qualitative interviews with Dutch and Lithuanian self-initiated repatriates who repatriated to their home countries on their own initiative and without organizational support after living and working abroad. Second, in Chapter 5 by *Acil Abdul Hadi* this framework is applied to study how different expatriates develop themselves in the three areas of the career capital framework: their global skills and abilities (know-how), their work motivations (know-why) and their social networks (know-whom). She also provides new evidence on developmental impacts of expatriation based on 27 semi-structured interviews conducted with expatriates and HR-professionals. Her results show that expatriates develop different skillsets, different work motivations and have various approaches in developing their social networks.

As expatriation is such a developmental experience it may also have extensive career impacts. The existing evidence on the impact of expatriation on careers is still quite limited and findings are controversial, thus more research has been called for regarding both subjective and objective career success (Andresen et al., 2022; Suutari et al., 2018) of both repatriates (Chiang et al., 2018) and re-expatriates who continue their international careers (Ho et al., 2016). Furthermore, we have far less evidence on careers of SIEs than of AEs (Mello et al., 2022). Chapter 6 by *Rodrigo Mello* reviews studies addressing both the objective and subjective

career success of self-initiated expatriates after their international assignments. In so doing, the chapter provides an overview of the research on the career impact of international assignments on SIEs as measured against career sub-dimensions such as promotions, salary level and career satisfaction, and suggests future research ideas to improve our understanding of SIE careers. In Chapter 7 by *Monika Bozhinoska Lazarova*, the focus is also on careers of a very specific focus group: politicians. The career angle is very different as this chapter looking at the impact that both national contexts and political parties as organizations have on immigrants' political careers. The study provides a descriptive overview of the organizational practices parties in the EU implement to support immigrants' integration.

PART III: EXPATRIATES' IDENTITIES, WELL-BEING, AND EMBEDDEDNESS

Context has always been a key topic that influences the career choices of individuals. This 'space' partly shapes the career agency of individual workers, for instance through social, cultural, and economic factors. But, of course, the 'being' who makes career decisions is partly a product of many, multi-layered factors that include elements such as personality, knowledge, skills, and behaviours as well as career motivations and goals. In addition, the career journey has an element of 'time' that means that career choices undertaken at one career stage might have been different if those had been contemplated at an earlier or later time (Andresen et al., 2020a; Gunz & Mayrhofer, 2017). Just imagine the career choices of a young Ukrainian in 2021 (before the war in Ukraine) and now.

In fact, the massive changes in the space in which careers are played out over time are continuing to exert strong pressures for adaptability and proactiveness for global careerists. There are many developments under way – be they ecological challenges such as global warming, humanitarian challenges such as education and food provision, health threats as pandemics and other illnesses, technological advancement and cyber-security, governmental and policy dangers in relation to extremist ideas and security to name but a few – that lead to substantial changes in the world of work. Where careerists decide to live and work abroad, it normally means to leave established networks and support mechanisms and to seek something new, often in terms of radically different environments, increased learning and adventure (Andresen et al., 2020b; Doherty et al., 2011). While this leads to high density development (Mello et al., 2022), it often results in a range of personal challenges. The GLOMO project has explored a number of these pertinent challenges for global careerists, factoring in issues of space and time, which are the subject of Part III of this book.

Kerstin Martel (Chapter 8) explores the mobile self of global workers embedded in a shifting space over time. Her work uses, as a starting point,

individuals' identities, and notes that there are many conceptual and theoretical frameworks being used by authors. Crucially, however, she argues that existing theoretical underpinnings tend to use monolithic categorization and that the very fact that individuals move into a very different space and have the opportunity to rethink and reconceptualize their own selves is important to take account of. She illustrates how the concept of identity can be used in global mobility and migration and that it leads to an understanding that individual global careerists actually go through a process of dynamic identifications. This means that the interplay between (proactive) being, time and space would benefit from a conceptualization that takes account of the unique experiences and actions of global careerists.

One of the often explored challenges to working abroad is expatriate well-being. With the dramatic changes that were brought about by the Covid pandemic from 2020 onwards, the employers' duty of care and the well-being of foreign workers has moved into the focus of interest (Caligiuri et al., 2020). *Tania Biswas* (Chapter 9) picks up the call for more research and explores the well-being of expatriates during the pandemic. She investigates the effects of stressful conditions induced by Covid and explores the impact of well-being measures. Crucially, her work contrasts local and foreign workers and researches various consequences in terms of individual well-being. Amongst the interesting empirical data is that support from supervisors has a positive relationship with life satisfaction and that organizational support is positively related to work engagement, with expatriates demonstrating higher work engagement than their local counterparts when receiving organizational support. Organizations, therefore, are able to substantially impact the work engagement and work well-being of their foreign staff for which they have a duty of care and for which they are often willing to invest to actively manage some of the challenging effects of the pandemic (Dickmann & Bader, 2020).

Due to the complexity of factors associated with the 'being', 'space' and 'time' dimensions that shape global careers, it is important to develop broad-based, context-sensitive research approaches (Andresen et al., 2020a; Mayrhofer et al., 2020). *Anh Ngoc Nguyen* (Chapter 10) draws up a sophisticated framework that factors in individual, situational, organizational and institutional dimensions in order to depict the factors that contribute to the job embeddedness of migrants working abroad. Given that job embeddedness is able to help to predict performance, knowledge sharing and retention at work is clearly useful to have a good understanding of the pertinent factors and how these shape job embeddedness of migrant employees. Her systematic literature review is not just useful for expatriates to understand their own job embeddedness, it also develops valuable insights for organizational leaders to develop approaches that would augment their foreign workers' job embeddedness.

A related theme, the integration of migrant couples in Germany, is the topic of the next chapter, authored by *Teresa Freitas Monteiro* (Chapter 11). Using a large data set the chapter explores the effects of gender, in particular tied women movers, on economic and socio-cultural integration. The work uses a representative survey of the migrant population in Germany which is a valuable empirical addition to other works in the field that are normally based on much smaller samples. The findings are interesting. Tied movers are less likely to be integrated in a socio-cultural or economic sense allowing the conclusion that following your partner to live (and maybe work) abroad creates a higher hurdle to successful integration in the host nation (in this case Germany). Female migrants are less likely to be economically integrated than their male counterparts while no such statistical differences could be found vis-à-vis socio-cultural integration. It is striking that traditional gender norms still seem to be at play.

Together with the underrepresentation of assigned women expatriates the data in Chapter 11 constitutes food for thought for policy-makers and organizational leaders. In Part IV there are further challenges that the GLOMO project identified and developed recommendations for.

PART IV: CORPORATE GLOBAL MOBILITY MANAGEMENT CHALLENGES

The global mobility literature has been able to illuminate the field of working abroad from a wide range of angles (Dickmann & Baruch, 2011). It has outlined and analyzed an array of theoretical approaches, career implications and contextual considerations (Mayrhofer et al., 2020; Mello et al., 2022). Often, the more dangerous, difficult or costly aspects of working abroad have been stressed even though they are not always well-understood or assessed (Bader et al., 2021; McNulty & Tharenou, 2004; Renshaw et al., 2021). The GLOMO project explored a number of key challenges that are hitherto under-researched and worked towards an audit tool that allows some assessment of the status quo and outcomes of organizational global mobility strategies, policies and practices. Part IV of this book illuminates some of these important issues.

Language is often the neglected ‘child’ in global mobility. For starters, research indicates that organizations attribute a low importance to the capability to speak the host country’s language in the selection process of global assignees (Dickmann & Baruch, 2011). Beyond that, the actual language policies in terms of overarching corporate language definition, strategic orientation and local deployment are not frequently explored (Vulchanov, 2020). *Ivan Olav Vulchanov* (Chapter 12) investigates flexible language management amongst international workers in multinational organizations. Crucially, multinational corporations face twin pressures for global integration (where they would use a common language, say English, to standardize their corporate discourse and understanding

of issues) and local responsiveness, where, through flexible language management, local adaptation might occur. While some of the strategic configurational choices of multinational corporations have been explored (Bartlett & Ghoshal, 1989) and their associated international HRM implications (Farndale et al., 2010), this has not been the case for corporate languages. Given that international HRM configurations experience centrifugal pressures and show some other shortcomings (Dickmann & Müller-Camen, 2006), one (or several) common languages could be used together with local languages to help balance the conflicting pressures of integration and responsiveness.

Amongst a further challenge for HR departments and policy makers is actually gaining access to good information regarding the effectiveness of global mobility approaches. *Michael Dickmann, Cordula Barzantny and David Enser* (Chapter 13) address this challenge directly by introducing the ‘International Employer’ Audit Tool developed in the GLOMO project. The tool uses three time perspectives. In the ‘pre-departure’ phase, corporate goals, the global employee value proposition as well as selection and capability issues such as cultural intelligence are explored. The ‘on-assignment’ phase looks at pertinent themes such as training, learning and career capital development, rewards and performance management. The ‘post-assignment’ phase assesses workforce flows (including retention) and organizational demographics to inform efforts to improve global mobility approaches. Overall, the ‘International Employer’ Audit Tool strives to allow corporations to identify good expatriation practices, to benchmark themselves against other organizations and to refine their global mobility approaches. In addition, individuals are likely to benefit from more sophisticated corporate strategies, policies and processes guiding global work. Lastly, policy-makers would gain from access to and an overview of corporate global mobility actions and consequences to rethink and refine institutional provisions. The chapter provides five sample items for each of the areas and points out that organizations that are interested in the tool can access it free of charge on the GLOMO website (www.glomo.eu).

PART V: COUNTRY-LEVEL MIGRATION POLICIES AND THEIR IMPACT ON EXPATRIATES

Expatriation as a specific form of migration (Andresen et al., 2014) and ‘planned and well-managed migration policies’ receive great attention under the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (SDG 10.7). A policy can be understood and seen as a government's statements and actions regarding a certain issue, such as immigration. However, governments’ intentions and recipients’ perception of the intentions might deviate and be more or less accurate. Mispercep-

tions may inhibit relationships between governments and expatriates because expatriates who inaccurately interpret governments' intentions are not making adequately informed decisions regarding their behavioural response. To direct their actions and interactions with one another, people need to understand each other with enough accuracy (Bernieri, 2001). Part V of this book on 'Country-level migration policies and their impact on expatriates' examines the impact of expatriates' perceived immigration policies as well as Covid-19 pandemic related policies on their attitudes (perceived hostility and employability) and behaviours (going to and staying in certain countries).

While many studies focus on expatriates' perceptions of the host country, host population, employer, or police, their perceptions of immigration policies have not been adequately researched (Becker, 2019; Ramos et al., 2019). Chapter 14 is devoted to the transformation of migration policy in the United Kingdom in the wake of BREXIT. In view of a limited amount of research addressing the possible problems caused by expatriates' perceptions of institutional changes and narratives as potentially "hostile" (Jongczyk Sédès et al., 2022), *Monique Raupp* aims to contribute to the discussion on the impact country-level policies may have on expatriates and their perception of their host countries. More concretely, she discusses expatriation to the United Kingdom and expatriates' perceptions of being unwelcome in this host country due to its "hostile environment policy", a recent immigration policy, developed in light of the United Kingdom's intentions to leave the European Union (BREXIT). By this, this chapter contributes theoretically to a contextualized discussion of expatriates' international experiences in light of recent world changes (e.g., more nationalist behaviours), and in particular in host environments that are becoming less welcoming for certain international workers.

Jacopo Bassetto (Chapter 15) provides an economic analysis of expatriation flows in response to migration policies. A review of pioneering and recent literature on the economics of migration with a particular focus on highly qualified expatriates is provided. Many countries face constant challenges to attract and retain highly qualified expatriates, both to increase their human capital and to mitigate the negative effects of brain drain. Bassetto first reviews the current trends in migration of highly qualified expatriates, highlighting its main characteristics such as the rapid increase in the last decades, the main geographical directions, and its circularity. Second, he reviews studies that investigate both the determinants and the consequences of the migration of highly qualified expatriates, considering both the individual and the country perspective. Third, he reviews studies that evaluate different types of policies aimed at attracting and retaining expatriates. The focus is on policies that aim at integrating expatriates in the host labor market, such as the recognition of credential and naturalization

policies. Finally, the policy implications of these studies for the further implementation and improvement of migration policies are discussed.

The Covid-19 pandemic led the European Union to predict its worst depression ever and involving exceptionally high levels of unemployment (Gamlen, 2020). The high unemployment rates, in turn, were accompanied by declining demand for SIEs by employers, as they were able to draw on a large pool of unemployed domestic workers and were under political pressure to hire them instead of expatriates. Some SIEs therefore took jobs that were below their qualification level or chose not to retrain for new jobs (Gamlen, 2020). Consequently, the pandemic affected the employability of SIEs. Employability is defined as the ability to be employed, including the ability to obtain initial employment, to maintain employment, and to gain new employment if necessary (Hillage & Pollard, 1998). This requires the individuals' capacity and willingness to anticipate and respond proactively to changes in the work environment, such as those that occurred in the wake of the pandemic (Sanders & de Grip, 2004). Thus, an individual's employability depends on both individual and contextual factors. However, whether an expatriate sees opportunities to find and retain employment depends on their perception of macro factors and fit of their own skills (Andresen, 2021). Expatriates will only apply for jobs in another country if they see a chance of success in getting and keeping the job. The net result in the future could be that companies overall will be less dependent on hiring SIEs to fill seasonal shortages and skills gaps in the workforce, and SIEs will show less willingness to go abroad (a reversal of a decades-long trend). Chapter 16 deals with global career perspectives and employability of expatriates in times of health crises. *Cordula Barzantny* explores the challenges that researchers have faced during the Covid-19 pandemic. It depicts examples of transformation and resilience by young researchers. It outlines their changed research context and delineates their observations as well as their personal experience leading to re-imagination and re-conceptualisation of their intercultural situations. Amongst the changes observed was a move towards a stronger focus on mindfulness, sustainability, gender issues and sense-making in global mobility research unfolding in a radically novel landscape. Overall, the chapter affirms ways how to overcome the hurdles posed by the Covid-19 pandemic.

PART VI: OUTLOOK AND CONCLUSIONS

The title of this chapter 2 is 'Acting in the spirit of the whole'. The contributions in this book illustrate that SIEs are always influenced by the context of all their activities, whereby, due to the (initial) foreignness, the perception of and awareness of this context may be more pronounced among expatriates than among national workers and thus shape their attitudes, decisions, and actions

more clearly. We wish all readers of this book relevant new insights and inspiration from the research findings presented as well as from the suggestions for future research questions on SIEs in Chapter 17.

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