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Global Mobility

Reasons, Trends, and Strategies

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1.1 Introduction

According to a PwC report (PwC, 2019), ‘80% of the future workforce will be mobile, and many want to work anywhere, anytime’. Global mobility, that is, the relocation of people across countries, has and will continue to be a major trend. The total number of expatriates, that is, employees who live and work abroad for a limited period of time, is estimated to amount to around 66.2 million worldwide and has been on a steady rise (Finaccord, 2019). Taking a wider perspective, the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) estimates that there are currently around 250 million people living outside their home country, amounting to 3.3 per cent of the world’s population, and with 70 per cent of them of working age (OECD, 2017).

The coronavirus crisis that the world suffered in the final stages of us putting this book together has and will have a substantial influence on global mobility in the short run, and then several possible long-term effects, though as we write we cannot say what they may be. However, we are certain that in the long run global mobility will remain important because, as we explain in this chapter, it has a key role for the development of both individuals and organizations.

Global mobility presents both opportunities and challenges for organisations and individuals. Organisations despatch expatriates to transfer knowledge, for control and coordination, and management development (Edström & Galbraith, 1977), with the ultimate goal of improving innovation and organisational performance (Bebenroth & Froese, 2020; Chang, Gong, & Peng, 2012). In terms of management development, international experience is the most effective way for individuals to acquire new knowledge and skills and boost their careers (Froese, Kim, & Eng, 2016; Sarabi, Froese, & Hamori, 2017). Despite these merits, and the high cost of assigned expatriates, many assignments fail to meet

organisational, individual, and family expectations, which is very disappointing (Black & Gregersen, 1999).

In response, research and practice have investigated the reasons for success and failure (for a review, see Bhaskar-Shrinivas, Harrison, Shaffer, & Luk, 2005). Large consulting companies such as PwC, KPMG and Mercer have dedicated business units, and smaller specialised consulting companies have emerged to support companies in managing their expatriates. Larger multinational enterprises (MNEs) also have their own dedicated teams to prepare and support their expatriates. Despite all this wealth of knowledge and expertise, some expatriates continue to struggle and fail to meet organisational objectives. Economic shifts, demographic changes, and digitalisation have created a more diverse landscape in global mobility and new challenges (Bonache et al., 2018). For instance, MNEs increasingly utilise self-initiated expatriates (Froese & Peltokorpi, 2013; Furusawa & Brewster, 2018), international business travellers, and short-term assignees (Mäkelä, Saarenpää, & McNulty, 2017). While expatriate research has produced great insights, many questions remain unanswered. In particular, research has had difficulties in keeping pace with recent trends in global mobility.

Thus, this book provides a comprehensive and up-to-date overview of the topic. This book is a reader on international working. We asked some of the leading scholars in international human resource management to bring together, to synthesise, and to comment on what is known about key aspects of current debates on global mobility. This book will help professionals, scholars, and students to comprehend the complexity and diversity of international work.

This chapter will introduce background information and recent trends in expatriation. We will begin by briefly reviewing the early literature on expatriation, from the 1960s to the late 1980s. We will then describe some changes that occurred in the 1990s that transformed radically the field of global mobility. Finally, we will outline key trends in global mobility that define its current landscape. The chapter concludes by summarising the contents and key contributions that the reader will find in each chapter of this book.

1.2 Early Research: The Prototypical Expatriate

In early research, the term ‘global mobility’ was restricted to expatriation and that in turn was restricted to refer to those work experiences in which

individuals, and oftentimes their families, are relocated from one country to another by an employer, generally from a context of familiarity (a home country) to one of greater novelty (a host country) for a limited period of time (Caligiuri & Bonache, 2016). These globally mobile employees were typically known as ‘expatriates’ or ‘international assignees’, and their existence had grown in importance as firms expanded their global reach.

From the 1960s through the late 1980s, then, researchers studying expatriates were examining a relatively homogeneous group within organisations: senior executives from developed-country headquarters of large MNEs sent abroad for a period of two to five years. They were mostly married men who were sent to be ‘in charge’ of a host-country subsidiary. This prototypical expatriate of the past brought with him his non-working wife – and the company’s way of doing things. He would enjoy a generous compensation and benefits package for the ‘hardship’ of living in another country. This homogenous group enabled numerous macro-level and micro-level studies that came to build and define a fascinating literature on the expatriation experience.

1.2.1 When and Why Assigned Expatriates Are Used

At the macro level, early global mobility research focused on when and how expatriates foster a firm’s strategic growth globally. In the 1970s, as companies began to accelerate their global reach, there was an interest in understanding the strategic reasons for expatriate assignments. To this end, Edström and Galbraith (1977), in their seminal article, identified three key functions or reasons for expatriation: for control, organisational development, and for management development.

The first potential function of expatriates, the control role, is for expatriates to represent the parent company’s interests in the subsidiary. Headquarters send expatriates to liaise between the home- and host-country interests, safeguard the organisation’s overall interests, and ensure that the decisions made in the subsidiary do not compromise the organisation as a whole (Boyacigiller, 1990; Brewster, 1991). Edström and Galbraith (1977) noted that the control function also tends to involve an element of coordination, especially in firms from industries with a high overall integration of their operations (e.g., automobiles). Expatriates are familiar with the firm’s international network; they are aware of the impact a subsidiary’s decisions may have on the rest of the corporation; and they develop

numerous contacts, which thereby permit them to act as go-betweens across interdependent units (Boyacigiller, 1990). In this organisational development role, expatriates have formal position power to give them control, are socialising agents to impart culture, and can use informal communication to foster network ties (Harzing, 2001).

The second function identified by Edström and Galbraith (1977) is to transfer knowledge from headquarters to the subsidiary in order to develop the organisation. This knowledge may be of a general nature (e.g., corporate culture) or more technical and specific, such as that referring to the processes of purchasing inputs (e.g., purchasing or negotiating skills), transformation (e.g., product design, process engineering), or outputs (e.g., marketing skills). Much of this knowledge is tacit, as it cannot be coded or set out in manuals, but instead is steeped in the experience and skills of the organisation's members (Polanyi, 1962). This means that its global dissemination can best be achieved by posting staff abroad (Bonache & Brewster, 2001; Mäkelä & Brewster, 2009). It should be noted that Edström and Galbraith (1977) do not refer to knowledge transfer, *per se*; it was later, especially after the knowledge-based view of the firm was introduced in the management literature (Barney, 1991), that the expatriates performing this function became known as 'knowledge agents' (e.g., Bonache & Brewster, 2001; Beaverstock, 2004; Bonache & Zárraga-Oberty, 2008).

The final expatriate function identified by Edström and Galbraith (1977) is management development. Through international assignments, high-potential executives become immersed in a wide array of new and challenging intercultural situations (Black, Gregersen, & Mendenhall, 1992), which will enable them to develop a holistic approach and global business acumen. This experience will lead to greater career opportunities for those executives seeking professional growth (Brewster, 1991), as well as provide the MNE with a competitive advantage (Spreitzer, McCall, & Mahoney, 1997).

Far from having a merely historical interest, the contribution made by Edström and Galbraith (1977) is one of the topics in expatriate literature that is deemed to be widely accepted, appearing in practically every study that seeks to explain the deployment of expatriates in MNEs (Tan & Mahoney, 2006). However, as will be highlighted later, while the three expatriate functions that they identified are still valid in organisations today, the mix and relative importance of these functions have changed dramatically.

1.2.2 Traditional Challenges for the Assigned Expatriates

Early micro-research on expatriation focused on the main issues and challenges that people performing these strategic functions had to face. Two main challenges came to dominate the literature. One refers to the high rates of expatriate failure, particularly among US expatriates (Tung, 1988). It was estimated that 20–40 per cent of US expatriates returned prematurely without completing their assignments. This is three to four times higher than the failure rates experienced by European and Asian companies, although the US rate was almost certainly an overestimate (Harzing, 1995). Apart from early return, prior research also identified that around a third of expatriates performed below expectations abroad (Black & Gregersen, 1999). Expatriation assignments are costly, and when they fail, because they have to be brought back early or because they under-perform, the cost to all involved is high. Research has investigated the reasons for such failures. In particular, prior research identified cross-cultural adjustment (Church, 1982; Mendenhall & Oddou, 1985, 1986), training (Fiedler, Mitchel, & Triandis, 1971; Tung, 1981), selection (Caligiuri, 2000), and family problems (Stephens & Black, 1991) as the main reasons for success or failure. Accordingly, this book will tackle these challenges in Chapters 2, 3, and 4 to help us better understand the causes of expatriation success.

The other ‘star’ challenge in this era was that of repatriation, again highlighted for over thirty years (Caligiuri & Bonache, 2016; Lazarova & Cerdin, 2007; Suutari & Brewster, 2003; Yan, Zhu, & Hall, 2002). Early research reported that many repatriates leave their organisation within two years after repatriation, limiting the return on any developmental gain the expatriate might have brought to the globalisation efforts of the company in the future (Black et al., 1992; Harvey, 1982). And they generally stay in the same occupational field, working for competitors. Given the costs of expatriate assignments, this is poor human resource management. One study found that 42 per cent of repatriates had seriously considered leaving the company and 26 per cent were actively searching for an alternative employer (Black et al., 1992).

Some of the primary reasons repatriates often gave for leaving their organisation are also typical today (Festing & Maletzky, 2011; Kraimer et al., 2012; Ren et al., 2013). They include a lack of respect

for the acquired skills (Gómez Mejía & Balkin, 1987), loss of status (Harvey, 1982), poor planning for return position (Gómez Mejía & Balkin, 1987), and reverse culture shock (Black & Gregersen, 1991). The extensive research on the 'repatriation problem' clearly highlighted how offering expatriate career advancement opportunities that are consistent with expatriates' new internationally oriented identities are critical to increase repatriation retention. Thus, Chapter 6 will discuss in detail repatriation and career development.

1.3 Changes in the Context

The aforementioned macro and micro issues and challenges in relation to assigned expatriates, introduced before 1990, provided a solid foundation for the field of expatriation by revealing high-level issues (e.g., strategic alignment, selection, cross-cultural adjustment, repatriation) in the field of global mobility. However, a number of economic, technological, organisational, and demographic changes in the business population from the 1990s onwards have had significant influence on the research and practice in global mobility. Such changes are summarised in Table 1.1.

1.3.1 *Changes Affecting the Deployment of Expatriates*

From the 1990s onwards, there were a number of major transformations that led to greater globalisation (Dunning, 2009). First, the fall of the Berlin Wall led to a transition to a market economy in many former Soviet-bloc countries. An alternative model, retaining a single-party state government, would also be followed by China, with the ensuing impact this has had on the global economy. Second, the liberalisation of cross-border markets encouraged regional economic integration (e.g., NAFTA, AFTA, APEC, and the European Union) and stimulated economic growth and accelerated international commercial transactions among businesses and private individuals. Third, the digital revolution and the advances made in information technology and computing systems paved the way for all firms (large and small) to embark upon greater innovation, and launch into markets that had, in prior years, been inaccessible. Fourth, there was a dynamic increase in the international operations of firms from every part of the world. Large MNEs, which not only reinforced their international

Table 1.1 *The changing nature of global mobility*

	Traditional expatriation (1960s to the late 1980s)	Type of change	Modern global mobility approach (1990s to the present)
a. Deployment of expatriates			
Reason for expatriation emphasised in the literature	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Control of subsidiaries • Fill skill gaps unavailable in host countries 	<p><i>Increased globalisation</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fall of the Berlin Wall • Liberalisation of cross-border markets 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Knowledge transfer around MNEs • Professional development of global leaders
<i>Typical mobility flow</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • One-directional flow from headquarters to subsidiaries • Mostly from large US, European, and Japanese headquarters 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Digital revolution • Increase in international operations 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mobility in all directions (e.g., lateral moves, reverse expatriations) and different periods • MNEs from emerging markets and developing countries
b. Demographic changes			
<i>Gender</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Male expatriates 	<p><i>Demographic and societal changes</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • More female expatriates
<i>Age and level</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Middle-aged • Senior-level managers and executives 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of households with dual-career couples 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All ages • From all levels in the organisation

Table 1.1 (cont.)

	Traditional expatriation (1960s to the late 1980s)	Type of change	Modern global mobility approach (1990s to the present)
<i>Other family issues</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Single-income families • Non-working spouse 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of women working internationally • Increased lifespan of people globally 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dual-career couples • Elderly parents • Non-traditional families
c. Changes in careers and working conditions			
<i>Duration of assignments</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Relatively long assignments (two- to four-year period) 	<i>Communication and labour market changes</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • More travelling, short-term and project-oriented forms of global mobility
<i>Employment modes</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Relational contracts 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Advances in communications and the easy of global travel 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Relational and transactional contracts
<i>Initiating the global experience</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The company requests employees to relocate 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Changes in employment modes • Increase number of global careers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The company posts open requisitions for international assignments • The employees request opportunities for international assignments

Dominant perspective

- Headquarters' perspective was dominant

Prototypical expatriate

- Senior male executives from developed-country headquarters of large multinational corporations sent abroad for a period of two to five years

As a result of the above changes



- Multiple perspectives (headquarters, regional, local) are considered
- A diverse landscape of expatriation experiences (e.g., corporate long- and short-term assignments, international commuters, self-initiated expatriates, migrants)

transactions, also increased their direct investment abroad, either through joint ventures or through wholly owned subsidiaries. New players also appeared on the economic scene, such as new MNEs from emerging countries, particularly in Asia, and small- and medium-sized enterprises, some being ‘born global’.

These factors led to a redistribution of power around the world and the emergence of some countries (particularly China) as new world economic champions. This had obvious implications for the home country of expatriates. Before the 1990s era of globalisation, international assignments were the domain of US and European firms (Brewster et al., 2014). The huge investment in Japan following the Second World War enabled it to become a leader in the automobile and electronics industries, with it being commonplace at the time to wonder how to respond to the Japanese challenge (Ouchi, 1981). It is not surprising, therefore, that expatriation in Japanese firms was studied closely (e.g., Tsurumi, 1978). Along with the Japanese, European and American expatriates monopolised the expatriation landscape. This is no longer the case. By 2007, emerging market countries had seventy firms in Fortune’s ranking of the world’s five hundred largest corporations, when a decade earlier this same figure was only twenty (Guillén & García-Canal, 2009).

So, large MNEs began appearing in emerging countries, such as Samsung in South Korea, China Mobile Limited, and Reliance Industries Limited in India. The rapid growth of emerging economies also meant that these countries became the typical destination for MNEs from developed countries. China’s case is a particularly noteworthy one. As Bruning, Sonpar, and Wang (2012) have reported, in this new millennium China now hosts the highest number of expatriates per year, only behind the United States. It stands to reason that since the end of the 1990s, many studies have sought to understand the predictors of expatriate success in China (e.g., Selmer, 1999). Other studies have focused on different environments that may also be challenging for western expatriates, such as Japan (Froese & Peltokorpi, 2011; Peltokorpi & Froese, 2009) and Korea (Bader, Froese, & Kraeh, 2018; Stoermer et al., 2018). While firms in the past had posted talent from headquarters to other parts of the world, with the developed countries being the main destinations, some authors note that ‘[e]xpatriation no longer implies relocation to a glamorous site’ (Groysberg, Nohria, & Herman, 2011: 11); it could include countries

such as Nigeria (Okpara & Kabongo, 2011) and Iran (Soltani & Wilkinson, 2011).

A third implication the post-1990s era of globalisation had on global mobility was that more individuals being sent on expatriate assignments were from countries other than just the headquarters' country. This change was a major transition in leaders' mindset and organisational culture – one which has its own interesting history. We started seeing a greater use of 'inpatriate' assignments, an ethnocentric term for individuals from foreign subsidiaries who relocate for an expatriate assignment into the headquarters country (Froese et al., 2016; Portniagin & Froese, 2019; Sarabi et al., 2017), and third-country national assignments, individuals from one subsidiary who are relocated to another (Tarique, Schuler, & Gong, 2006). The diversity of 'to' and 'from' locations for international assignments has strategic implications for how – and how successfully – firms compete globally (Colakoglu, Tarique, & Caligiuri, 2009; Collings, Scullion, & Morley, 2007; Sarabi, Hamori, & Froese, 2019).

The more competitive and globalised business reality post 1990 required a new managerial mindset (Levy et al., 2007), labelled as a 'transnational' mentality (Ghoshal & Bartlett, 1990). The transnational mentality requires the simultaneous achievement of three different but complementary goals. The first is local responsiveness where MNEs differentiate their products and services to suit the preferences of their clients, the characteristics of the sector, and the cultural and legal environment of each one of the national markets in which they operate. The second goal or capability is the global integration of each MNE's operations in order to take advantage of different national factors of production, leverage economies of scale in all activities, and share costs and investments across different markets and business units. The third capability to be developed by a company competing across borders is innovation and a "learning organisation", which requires the different units (headquarters or subsidiaries) to learn from each other and exchange innovations in management systems and processes.

These strategic capabilities (and, in particular, the third one) have a clear impact on the deployment of expatriates. Although the three expatriate functions identified by Edström and Galbraith (1977) are still valid in the new context, it is also true that the mix of these functions has changed dramatically. Through the late 1980s the

control function dominated. Today, many firms are reported as identifying knowledge transfer and acquisition as the primary reason for sending expatriates on assignment (Brookfield, 2016; Stoermer, Davies, & Froese, 2017). This is an important change. Rather than expatriates as control-oriented subsidiary leaders (positions that are now more likely held by local managers), expatriates today are more strategically oriented towards knowledge transfer/organisational development (Beaverstock, 2004; Harzing, 2001; Welch, 2003) and management development (Spreitzer et al., 1997; Shaffer et al., 2012).

Reflecting this change from the control function to a broader organisational development function (Harzing, 2001), we have seen burgeoning research to understand the relationship between expatriation and knowledge transfer (e.g., Bonache & Brewster, 2001; Furuya et al., 2009; Lazarova & Tarique, 2005; Mäkelä & Brewster, 2009; Reiche, Harzing, & Kraimer, 2009). This focus is consistent with the strategic literature on the difficulties of knowledge transfer within a firm's international network (Kostova, 1999; Szulanski, 1996) and has been flagged as a more arduous task than was predicted by the models of transnational firms where information flowed freely (Ghoshal & Bartlett, 1990).

In addition to knowledge transfer, managerial development has received increased attention as an essential reason to send people abroad. Today, consultants report 23 per cent of firms identify management development as a primary objective of international assignments (Brookfield, 2015). Recent research has brought to the fore the importance of international experience for people's professional development and their career possibilities (Cerdin & Pargneux, 2009; Sarabi et al., 2017). Expatriation is good for your marketability (Mäkelä et al., 2016) and for your career (Schmid & Wurster, 2017; Sarabi et al., 2017; Suutari et al., 2017). Further, the international experience of top management has a positive impact on the firm's performance (Daily, Certo, & Dalton, 2000; Carpenter, Sanders, & Gregersen, 2001), the level of presence in global markets (Carpenter & Fredrickson, 2001), and access to valuable knowledge with a view to formulating more effective global strategies (Athanasios & Nigh, 2000).

1.3.2 Demographic Changes

Three demographic trends have had a great impact on the composition of the population of expatriates and the availability of expatriate

candidates (Caligiuri & Bonache, 2016): (1) the number of households with dual-career couples, (2) the increased number of women on international assignments, and (3) the increased lifespan of people globally. Regarding the first of these trends, families, once traditionally, in the West at least, having a male primary income earner and a female homemaker, have now changed. At the time of early research, in the 1970s and 1980s, expatriates tended to be married men, likely with a wife who did not work outside of the home. Today, consultancies find married men comprise around half of expatriates (Brookfield, 2016). These changing demographics have shifted the focus of support practices. For example, organisations are now focused on providing expatriate partners' career support and offer provision for unmarried and same-sex partners.

The issue of dual-career couples in the expatriate context goes even deeper than changing demographics. It has long been understood that global mobility affects the expatriate employee and all of his or her loved ones, whether directly or indirectly (Caligiuri & Bonache, 2016). Partners and children have had their lives disrupted for the sake of the expatriates' relocation, and their experiences in the host country can often have profound influence on the expatriates' sense of work–life balance and, subsequently, on the outcome of the assignment. These changes associated with the relocation may be even more pronounced for the accompanying partner compared to the expatriate employee; while the expatriate has the routine and the social network of his or her new position, the partner needs to re-establish a personal and professional identity and a social network (Shaffer & Harrison, 2001).

Considering women on international assignments, the number of expatriate women apparently rose from 3 per cent in the 1980s (Adler, 1984), to 10–14 per cent in the 1990s, and to 16–20 per cent in the new millennium (see Salamin & Hanappi, 2014 for a review). The under-representation of female expatriates was not due to the lack of interest among women in pursuing an international career (Adler, 1987). Rather, it was due to prejudice on the part of managers, who believed that women were not viable candidates for international assignments because of dual-career marriages, host country nationals' (HCN) unwillingness to work with women, and an assumed lack of interest in expatriation (Adler, 1984; Stroh, Varma, & Valy-Durbin 2000). Today, more than half of female expatriates think that they face greater obstacles in getting accepted for assignments than men

(Brookfield, 2016). In most organisations, selection processes are informal, which allows such prejudices more scope (Harris & Brewster, 1999; Varma, Stroh, & Schmitt, 2001). Women do face unique issues related to their adjustment and success in different positions and host-country locations (Caligiuri & Bonache, 2016).

The last of the above demographic trends is also very relevant. As life expectancy increases globally, there is a greater number of professionals who are part of the ‘sandwich generation’; sandwiched between caring for children they have had later in life and caring for elderly parents living longer. Recent decades have seen a dramatic increase in average life expectancy. Global life expectancy in the 1950s was 48 years and is predicted to rise to 75 years by 2050 (Chand & Tung, 2014). Life expectancy in the developed world is now 82 years (Chand & Tung, 2014). Increased longevity has had an impact on global mobility, with organisations extending relocation benefits to elderly parents who are dependent on their adult children for care (Brookfield, 2016). A number of firms (small percentage) that did so even paid for provision for elder care in the assignment location.

Taken together, these changes in the demography of expatriates have resulted in major challenges for women expatriates and global families. Accordingly, this book has two chapters on these topics: Chapter 10 on women and global mobility and Chapter 11 on global families.

1.3.3 Changes Affecting Careers and Working Conditions

Given the advances in communications and the ease of global travel, not only the number of traditional long-term managerial assignments continues to grow, but other less costly and more project-oriented forms of international staffing are growing faster (Beaverstock, 2004; Tharenou & Harvey, 2006). One different form of international mobility is short-term assignments (Collings, McDonnell, & McCarter, 2015; Suutari & Brewster, 2009; Mäkelä et al., 2017). Short-term assignments are usually defined (Collings et al. 2015) as work in another country lasting less than 12 months, although in practice the fiscal and residency issues that arise after six months means that six months is the usual maximum period. Another form of short-term assignments is international business travel, by people who do not relocate but engage in multiple short-term business trips. Short-term assignments have always been present in organisations, but they are

being used at a far greater level in response to both cost and strategic pressures (Collings et al., 2007). This trend is also an outcome of an ever-increasing share of the labour force in some places expressing a resistance to international mobility (Colling et al., 2007; Harvey, Buckley, & Novicevic, 2000) and a desire to solve or, at least, reduce a major organisational concern: the high cost of expatriate compensation packages (Bonache, 2006; Collings et al., 2007; Bonache & Stirpe, 2012).

The nature and type of expatriate assignments is also widening. Globalisation has brought with it greater flexibility (geographic, temporal) and a wider variety of contractual relations (Banai & Harry, 2004). In particular, it has led to the displacement of relational contracts – those based on loyalty and long-term service – with transactional ones – those based on projects (Herriot & Pemberton, 1995). It has been argued that organisation-based careers are being replaced by more ‘protean careers’ (Hall, 2004), careers that are self-managed rather than organisation-directed and defined by greater inter-organisational mobility. The driving forces behind these careers are people’s own values; career success is determined by professional satisfaction rather than the number of organisational promotions.

While traditional careers continue to exist for many people (Cappelli, 1999), there is more organisational mobility in professional careers – a change mirrored in today’s mobile expatriate population. Fifty years ago one could correctly assume that corporate expatriates were bound to their organisations by a long-term relational contract (Rousseau, 2004), a tacit agreement whereby expatriates agreed to live and work abroad for two to five years in exchange for a generous pay package and future career opportunities. This has changed, with research suggesting that not all expatriates had a relational connection; rather, some expatriate assignments have a transactional purpose (Pate & Scullion, 2010; Yan et al., 2002). For the organisation, the task to be performed by the expatriate may be technical or routine in nature and have a well-defined temporal horizon. Individuals, in turn, may look upon the position as a good opportunity for learning, developing new contacts, or applying their own knowledge in an international context. In such cases, their continuity with the organisation once the project has been completed is not an option for them, which means that staff turnover should not then be seen as a failure from either the individual or the firm’s perspective (Cerdin & Pargneux, 2009; Yan et al., 2002).

The need to incorporate additional perspectives in the discussion of careers and working conditions has also become increasingly clear. Although there are many people living and working outside their home countries as corporate expatriates, in relative terms they make up a very small number of employees, particularly when they are compared to HCNs (i.e., local employees who work in the various countries in which MNEs operate). The relative proportion of each one of these groups is very uneven. Some surveys (e.g., Bonache, Sánchez, & Zárraga-Oberty, 2009) affirm that expatriates comprise just 0.8 per cent of the workforce of US and European MNEs, and up to 2.7 per cent in the case of Japanese MNEs, where it is customary to employ a larger number of expatriates (Bartlett & Yoshihara, 1988; Kopp, 1994). Despite being quantitatively far more numerous, the perspective of HCN employees in relation to the expatriate experience was practically ignored by research in the 1970s and 1980s (cf Adler, 1987, for a notable exception). This changed in the past few decades as the HCN-expatriate relationships became a focus of investigation (Bader et al., 2017; Chen, Choi, & Chi, 2002; Toh & Denisi, 2003; Bruning et al., 2012).

Leading this research on host nationals' perspectives was an examination of the salary gap between HCN and expatriate staff (Chen et al., 2002; Oltra, Bonache, & Brewster, 2013; Toh & Denisi, 2003), a topic that will be dealt with in Chapter 5. Another area of focus is the role HCN play as socialising agents, sources of social support, assistance and friendship for expatriates (Bader et al., 2017; Mahajan & Toh, 2014; Toh & Denisi, 2003; Varma, Budhwar, & Pichler, 2011). For example, some research has identified how expatriates' individual characteristics, such as ethnocentrism, can affect HCNs' willingness to offer expatriates information and support (Varma, Pichler, & Budhwar, 2011) and be socialising agents for them (Toh & Denisi, 2007).

The specific influence of HCNs on expatriate assignment outcomes is just starting to be understood. For example, Bruning et al. (2012) found a relationship between expatriate relationships with HCN colleagues and adjustment. In any case, it is important to note that the host national perspective is not a homogeneous one. In an ethnographic study on the Romanian subsidiaries of US corporations, HCNs constitute a cultural group with values influenced by their headquarters or home cultures (Caprar, 2011). Similar to what the next section will

highlight for the case of expatriates, HCN are not identical in their roles, positions, or perspectives.

1.3.4 A New and More Diverse Landscape in Global Mobility

We have reviewed the expatriate issues that have changed as a function of economic, competitive, and demographic trends in the post-1990. Each one of the changes analysed highlights how the scope of expatriation has become much more complex and heterogeneous. Specifically, we have seen – and continue to see – a broader plurality of reasons and employment modes for expatriation, a broader diversity in the assignments location and nationalities, a higher complexity of family and gender issues, and increasing interest in host country nationals' perspectives.

In addition to corporate expatriates, the traditional focus of mainstream expatriation literature, there are even more forms of international working, such as self-employed consultants, and those from another country with short-term employment (not unknown amongst academics, actors or musicians, for example). International commuters are people who live in one country and work in another. There are many of these in Europe, where the packing together of lots of small countries, and the automatic working rights of all EU citizens makes cross-border working very easy, but there are also cases where expatriates are working in dangerous locations and their family is housed in a nearby safer country, so that they can more easily be together in between periods of work. These different types of expatriation are discussed in more depth in Chapter 7.

Today's literature on global mobility does not restrict its attention to long and short-term assigned expatriates. Following the first identification of self-initiated expatriates (SIEs) (Suutari and Brewster 2000), the literature on SIEs has expanded enormously (Cerdin & Selmer, 2014; Froese & Peltokorpi, 2013; Peltokorpi & Froese, 2009). SIEs are foreign professionals who find employment in a foreign country on their own. Unlike assigned expatriates, SIE receive no or little expatriate benefits. Chapter 8 provides a comprehensive update of the burgeoning SIE literature.

Despite attempts to restrict this group to the elite (Cerdin & Selmer 2014), this field in turn expanded so that there have recently been studies focusing not only on highly skilled-migrants (Tharenou,

2015) but also on low status expatriates (Haak-Saheem and Brewster 2017; Özçelik et al., 2019). In the past, the sociological literature focused on migrants and low status expatriates, while the business literature focused on corporate, high-status expatriates. Organisations and business researchers have identified the importance of migrants as a source capable of filling the demand for labour. Thus, Chapter 9 provides insights into the careers of migrants.

1.4 Summary and Outline of the Book

This chapter has elaborated on what expatriates are, what they do, and why they are important. Moreover, we have explained how economic shift, digitalisation, and globalisation have led to major changes in global mobility. We have seen how the diversity of ways of working internationally has created an important need for conceptual clarity in research and practice on global mobility. All these new forms of global mobility may create a set of additional and different challenges from the ones typically analysed in traditional expatriation literature. To obtain a comprehensive overview and further our understanding of the current situation and future trends, we have compiled this up-to-date book on global mobility, with contributions from world-renowned experts from four different continents. Interestingly, many of the contributors had lived or are currently living outside their home country. All chapters of the book review the extant literature and provide implications for research and practice.

Considering both organisational needs and current trends in global mobility, we have organised our book into two parts. Part 1 deals with the expatriation process of corporate expatriates. We offer five chapters that depict the typical expatriation cycle of assigned expatriates covering important aspects before, during, and after the expatriate assignments. Chapter 2, written by Marie-France Waxin, based in the United Arab Emirates, and Chris Brewster, UK, discusses selection and training, important yet often neglected issues, before the international assignment. The following three chapters deal with important aspects during the international assignment. Chapter 3, authored by Anne Lessle, Australia, Arno Haslberger, Austria, and Chris Brewster, UK, critically assess cross-cultural adjustment, which has been identified in prior expatriate research as a core variable explaining expatriate success. Chapter 4, written by Arup Varma, USA, Chun-Hsiao Wang,

China, and Pawan Budwhar, UK, introduces performance management for expatriates, an important but often neglected function. Chapter 5, written by Jaime Bonache, Spain, and Celia Zarraga-Oberly, Spain, deals with an important topic for both expatriates and employing organizations, that is, compensation. Chapter 6, authored by Flora F. T. Chiang, China, Emmy van Esch, China, and Thomas Birtch, UK, focuses on the critical time after the international assignments, that is, repatriation, and pays particular attention to career development.

Considering the changing trends in global mobility, Part 2 of our book looks at the different types of expatriates and stakeholders. Three chapters focus on different types of expatriates, two chapters focus on the changing roles of women and family, and Chapter 12 focuses on the global mobility department. Chapter 7, written by Chris Brewster, UK, Michael Dickmann, UK, and Vesa Suutari, Finland, introduces different types of expatriates, including international business travellers, short-term assignees, and international commuters. Chapter 8, authored by Sebastian Stoermer, Germany, Fabian Jintae Froese, Germany, and Vesa Peltokorpi, Japan, provides insights into self-initiated expatriates, a group of expatriates that has received substantial research attention in recent years. Chapter 9, written by Jelena Zikic, Canada and Viktoria Voloshya, Canada, directs our attention to skilled migrants, a group that has been largely neglected in international business research until recently. Chapter 10, written by Helen De Cieri, Australia, reinforces awareness of the changing role of women in global mobility. Chapter 11, written by Margaret A. Shaffer, USA and Min (Maggie) Wan, USA, provides an overview of the important role of the family. Chapter 12, written by Michael Dickmann, UK, completes our book by explaining the role of the global mobility department.

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