



This is a repository copy of *Toward a person-centered approach to cross-cultural adjustment: comparing profiles between female and male expatriates*.

White Rose Research Online URL for this paper:

<https://eprints.whiterose.ac.uk/id/eprint/232453/>

Version: Published Version

Article:

Lei, L. orcid.org/0000-0001-6025-318X, Ngo, T.A., Yu, H. orcid.org/0000-0002-1492-4250 et al. (2 more authors) (2025) Toward a person-centered approach to cross-cultural adjustment: comparing profiles between female and male expatriates. *Journal of Business Research*, 201. 115733. ISSN: 0148-2963

<https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jbusres.2025.115733>

Reuse

This article is distributed under the terms of the Creative Commons Attribution (CC BY) licence. This licence allows you to distribute, remix, tweak, and build upon the work, even commercially, as long as you credit the authors for the original work. More information and the full terms of the licence here:

<https://creativecommons.org/licenses/>

Takedown

If you consider content in White Rose Research Online to be in breach of UK law, please notify us by emailing eprints@whiterose.ac.uk including the URL of the record and the reason for the withdrawal request.



eprints@whiterose.ac.uk
<https://eprints.whiterose.ac.uk/>



Toward a person-centered approach to cross-cultural adjustment: comparing profiles between female and male expatriates

Lianghui Lei^a, Thi Alice Ngo^b, Honglan Yu^b, Kweku Adams^{c,*}, Ondřej Částek^d

^a School of Finance and Economics, Guangdong Polytechnic Normal University, Guangzhou 510665, China

^b Sheffield University Management School, The University of Sheffield, Conduit Road, Sheffield S10 1FL, UK

^c Bradford School of Management, University of Bradford, Bradford BD7 1SR, UK

^d Faculty of Economics and Administration, Masaryk University, 602 00 Brno, The Czech Republic

ARTICLE INFO

Keywords:

Female expatriates
Expatriate profiles
Person-centered research
Conservation of resources theory
Fuzzy-set qualitative comparative analysis

ABSTRACT

This study advances our understanding of expatriate adjustment by integrating a person-centered approach with the Conservation of Resources (COR) theory to compare the cross-cultural adjustment profiles of female and male expatriates. We examine how gender, marital status, extraversion, cultural intelligence (CQ), and host-country language proficiency collectively impact cross-cultural interaction adjustment. Using fuzzy-set Qualitative Comparative Analysis (fsQCA) on 106 expatriates in the Czech Republic, we find that female expatriates can achieve adjustment levels comparable to their male counterparts; however, success requires a broader and more integrated set of personal resources, especially for married women. These findings challenge assumptions of homogeneous expatriate experiences and highlight the need for profile-specific strategies in expatriate management. The study extends COR theory by demonstrating how structural disadvantages shape resource accumulation processes and by expanding the principle of equifinality to emphasize configuration-based pathways to adjustment. It also shows that expatriate adjustment depends on the interplay and synergy of multiple personal traits rather than isolated characteristics. Our results offer practical implications for developing targeted support mechanisms tailored to different expatriate subgroups.

1. Introduction

Cross-cultural interaction adjustment, defined as expatriates' psychological comfort in interacting and socializing with host-country nationals (HCNs), is a foundational aspect of expatriates' cross-cultural adjustment (CCA) (Black et al., 1991; Caligiuri & Lazarova, 2002). Effective interactions with HCNs not only facilitate overall adjustment but also enhance work-related adaptation and job performance (Bhaskar-Shrinivas et al., 2005; Selmer, 2006). Despite recognition of female expatriates as vital contributors to the global success of multinational corporations (Bader et al., 2023; Sperber & Linder, 2024), they remain underrepresented in international assignments (Mercer, 2020). Persistent gender stereotypes and organizational biases often cast doubt on women's ability to succeed in interactions with HCNs in foreign environments (Altman & Shortland, 2008; Caligiuri & Lazarova, 2002; Hutchings et al., 2013; Selmer & Lanning, 2011; Selmer & Leung, 2003). This underrepresentation is concerning given the need for a

diverse and capable expatriate workforce to ensure a wide talent pool in times of global uncertainty (Erdi et al., 2022).

While research has long explored female expatriates' CCA (Altman & Shortland, 2008; Caligiuri & Tung, 1999; Linehan & Scullion, 2004; Salamin & Davoine, 2015; Selmer & Leung, 2003; Sinangil & Ones, 2003), existing literature often treats female expatriates as a homogeneous group with uniform CCA experiences (Haak-Saheem et al., 2022; Makkonen, 2015; Mayrhofer & Scullion, 2002; Sperber & Linder, 2024). It also tends to assume that all female expatriates are powerless individuals confined within penalizing structural contexts, neglecting those who leverage their personal skills to overcome disadvantages and achieve adjustment success (France et al., 2019; Janssens et al., 2006). This gender-centric approach overlooks individual differences, leading to inconsistent findings—some studies show that female expatriates adjust better (Salamin & Davoine, 2015; Selmer & Leung, 2003), while others indicate poorer adjustment (Caligiuri & Tung, 1999), or no significant difference compared to their male counterparts (Cole &

* Corresponding author.

E-mail addresses: l.lei@gpnu.edu.cn (L. Lei), thi.ngo@sheffield.ac.uk (T.A. Ngo), Honglan.Yu@sheffield.ac.uk (H. Yu), k.adams3@bradford.ac.uk (K. Adams), Ondrej.Castek@econ.muni.cz (O. Částek).

<https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jbusres.2025.115733>

Received 21 March 2024; Received in revised form 11 September 2025; Accepted 12 September 2025

Available online 29 September 2025

0148-2963/© 2025 The Authors. Published by Elsevier Inc. This is an open access article under the CC BY license (<http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/>).

McNulty, 2011; Selmer, 2001; Sinangil & Ones, 2003). These inconsistencies suggest that characterizing an entire population using a single parameter of gender likely oversimplifies the complex reality (Hofmans et al., 2020; Takeuchi et al., 2019). Recognizing the need for a more nuanced understanding, recent research calls for examining subgroups within the female expatriate population, acknowledging that diverse demographic backgrounds and personal traits may lead to different CCA experiences (Haak-Saheem et al., 2022; Makkonen, 2015; Rodriguez & Ridgway, 2019).

Our research aims to challenge the gender-centric assumption by providing a contextualized understanding of different subgroups of female expatriates in comparison to their male counterparts. Specifically, we explore how gender, marital status, and personal traits such as extraversion, cultural intelligence (CQ), and host-country language ability combine to form distinct profiles that explain interaction adjustment outcomes. To do so, we integrate a person-centered approach with Conservation of Resources (COR) theory (Halbesleben et al., 2014; Hobfoll, 1989, 2001). COR theory posits that individuals are motivated to acquire and protect valuable resources, and to recover from or minimize the impact of resource loss (Halbesleben et al., 2014; Hobfoll, 1989, 2001). Expatriation, being inherently stressful, exposes expatriates to resource loss (Lazarova et al., 2010; Reiche et al., 2023; Silbiger et al., 2021). Female expatriates, in particular, often face greater resource depletion due to the masculine cultural norms and social expectations in host countries (Hutchings et al., 2013; Peck, 2020; Selmer & Leung, 2003). As a result, they may need to invest more heavily in personal resources, in the form of personal traits (Lazarova et al., 2010), to successfully adjust to cross-cultural interactions (Caligiuri & Lazarova, 2002; France et al., 2019; Lazarova et al., 2010).

The person-centered approach considers intra-individual variations by clustering expatriates into subpopulations based on multiple parameters (Gabriel et al., 2018; Hofmans et al., 2020), thereby enabling the exploration of how demographic factors and personal traits interplay to produce interaction adjustment outcomes. In summary, our research addresses the following questions: *How do expatriate profiles differ in terms of gender, marital status, extraversion, CQ, and host-country language ability, and how do these profiles influence cross-cultural interaction adjustment outcomes?*

Based on a fuzzy-set Qualitative Comparative Analysis of 106 expatriates in the Czech Republic, our findings underscore the interplay of gender, marital status, and personal traits in shaping expatriate adjustment. We demonstrate distinct gendered pathways to adjustment success, with female and male expatriates leveraging different resource configurations to navigate adjustment challenges. Male expatriates often succeed with fewer resources, relying primarily on language proficiency and extraversion. In contrast, female expatriates, particularly those who are married, require a broader combination of extraversion, CQ, and language proficiency to achieve similar adjustment outcomes. These findings highlight the diverse subgroups within the expatriate population and inform the study's contributions.

Our research contributes to literature in four ways. First, by employing a person-centered approach, we identify effective profiles for female and male expatriates. These profiles reveal the subgroups within the expatriate population and challenge the assumption that expatriates are a homogenous group where the average CCA experience represents individual adjustment (Suutari et al., 2018; Takeuchi et al., 2019). By doing so, our research paves the way for future person-centered studies. Second, we extend COR theory by refining how resource loss and investment processes operate in gendered expatriate contexts. Contrary to literature that often portrays female expatriates as reliant on organizational support (Bader et al., 2023; Janssens et al., 2006), our findings demonstrate that they can leverage personal resources to counter male cultural norms and social expectations. Third, we further enrich COR theory by expanding the equifinality principle, showing that female and male expatriates achieve interaction adjustment through different resource configurations rather than single resource substitutions. We

highlight how equifinality operates differently across genders (Peck, 2020). Finally, we illuminate the complex interdependencies among personal traits, revealing how expatriates leverage their strengths to compensate for weaknesses. This nuanced understanding challenges the notion that certain traits are universally critical for CCA success (Leiba-O'Sullivan, 1999; Shaffer et al., 2006) and emphasizes trait composition and interdependencies in expatriate selection.

2. Theoretical background

2.1. A person-centered approach to expatriate adjustment

Implicit in the extant expatriation literature is the assumption of population homogeneity (Suutari et al., 2018; Takeuchi et al., 2019), where the CCA experience of the entire female expatriate population is simplified into a single gender parameter (Hutchings et al., 2013; Sperber & Linder, 2024). Although this gender-centric, variable-centered approach offers parsimony and facilitates the interpretation of research findings, it fails to capture the diverse subgroups of female expatriates. Importantly, this approach contradicts scholarly recommendations advocating for a holistic evaluation of female expatriates' profiles in selection processes beyond gender considerations (Bader et al., 2023; Caligiuri & Tung, 1999). Evidence suggests that research following this approach may have overlooked the nuanced differences among subgroups of female expatriates. For example, female expatriates' international career opportunities vary significantly based on their marital status (Haak-Saheem et al., 2022; Hutchings et al., 2010; Makkonen, 2015). Specifically, married female expatriates face greater challenges in balancing family responsibilities with career aspirations, limiting their willingness or ability to pursue international assignments. In contrast, single female expatriates typically experience fewer familial constraints, allowing them to take on more international opportunities. However, existing research comparing female and male expatriates has given little consideration to the CCA experiences among different female expatriate subgroups.

Person-centered approaches represent an avenue to address this limitation. These approaches relax the assumption of population homogeneity by categorizing individuals into distinct subgroups (Gabriel et al., 2018; Hofmans et al., 2020). The goal of person-centered approaches is to identify individuals with specific trait profiles and explore how these profiles and their outcomes vary within a population (Hofmans et al., 2020). As Gabriel et al. (2018, p. 185) noted, person-centered approaches allow researchers to "understand how variables operate *conjointly* and *within people* to shape outcomes" (italics in original). In other words, person-centered approaches identify quantitatively distinct groups varying in level (e.g., high, moderate, and low in CQ) and qualitatively distinct groups varying in type (e.g., expatriates who are married, have CQ, and speak the local language well versus those that are married, lack CQ, and do not speak the language) (Gabriel et al., 2018; Ong & Johnson, 2023). Importantly, such approaches align more closely with organizational practices, where decisions about people, such as selecting candidates for international assignments, are based on the person rather than isolated characteristics (De Fruyt, 2002).

Recent studies in International Human Resource Management literature have employed person-centered approaches to uncover meaningful subgroups that traditional variable-centered methods overlook. For example, Takeuchi et al. (2019) identified subgroups of expatriates exhibiting four different patterns of performance-change during their international assignments: U-curve, learning curve, stable high performance, and stable low performance. Similarly, Nguyen and Andresen (2023) unveiled four types of job embeddedness among international relocated workers. These findings suggest that internationally mobile individuals do not exhibit uniform characteristics but rather a range of distinct patterns that influence their adaptation and performance outcomes. To further understand how expatriate gender, marital status, and personal traits interplay to form distinct subgroups, we turn to COR

theory for theoretical support.

2.2. COR theory and expatriate adjustment

The core tenet of COR theory posits that individuals are motivated to preserve and protect existing resources and acquire new ones (Hobfoll, 1989). Resources are broadly defined as valuable objects, states, personal characteristics, conditions, or other things (Hobfoll, 2001). According to the theory, individuals experience stress when they face actual resource loss or perceive a threat of such loss (Hobfoll, 2001). To mitigate this stress, individuals engage in proactive behaviors to safeguard their resources and minimize potential losses, as such losses can significantly impact their well-being (Halbesleben et al., 2014). Additionally, COR theory highlights that contextual conditions, such as societal expectations and the work-family interface, can either provide individuals with additional resources, facilitate the acquisition of new ones, or exacerbate stress through increased allostatic load, leading to further resource depletion (Halbesleben et al., 2014).

Understanding expatriate CCA hinges on the role of resources (Lazarova et al., 2010; Reiche et al., 2023). In the context of expatriation, expatriates often undergo significant resource loss when they relocate to a foreign country (Lazarova et al., 2010; Reiche et al., 2023; Silbiger et al., 2021). For example, physical distance from family and friends can lead to a loss of connection and emotional support. Additionally, cultural resources may be lost due to the unfamiliarity of the host country's culture, language, and local customs (Bhaskar-Shrinivas et al., 2005; Ren et al., 2014; Silbiger et al., 2021). Navigating a novel social and cultural context may also result in a diminished sense of control. To achieve CCA success, expatriates must replace their lost resources with new ones to cope with stress and protect themselves from further resource loss (Lazarova et al., 2010; Reiche et al., 2023).

However, while all expatriates experience resource loss in general, the capacity to replenish resources differs significantly between male and female expatriates. Societal and familial roles generate asymmetric gender-specific expectations, forming stereotypes that reinforce societal norms about the roles and behaviors of males and females (Eagly & Steffen, 1986). Male expatriates, whose roles often align with the societal expectation of an expatriate, are more likely to receive access to replacement resources, such as organizational support mechanisms, social networks, and favorable perceptions from HCNs (Bader et al., 2023; Linehan & Scullion, 2004; Selmer & Leung, 2003). These resources help offset their initial losses and facilitate their adjustment. In this sense, being male functions as a resource in expatriation (Lazarova et al., 2010).

In contrast, female expatriates are often disadvantaged in this replenishment process. They may encounter culture-bound prejudices and negative stereotypes held by HCNs, which restrict their access to supportive networks and key adjustment-related resources (Altman & Shortland, 2008; Hutchings et al., 2013; Selmer & Leung, 2003). These challenges are particularly pronounced in contexts characterized by traditional gender norms, where management roles are socially constructed as masculine and female employees are perceived as less competent for these roles (Caligiuri & Tung, 1999; Linehan & Scullion, 2004). Even when female expatriates attain senior management positions, they may not receive the same recognition or legitimacy as their male counterparts, which limits their access to organizational and social support. As a result, female expatriates are not only more vulnerable to additional depletion but also more constrained in their ability to replace lost resources (Caligiuri & Lazarova, 2002). The lack of support increases their reliance on personal resources to manage their adjustment. Thus, social expectations do not simply add hurdles; they make personal resource investment a critical requirement for female expatriates' adjustment success.

Marriage presents another situation in which resource dynamics diverge significantly between male and female expatriates. Although some scholars consider marriage a resource for all expatriates (Black &

Stephens, 1989; Lazarova et al., 2010), offering emotional support and stability during expatriation (Selmer & Lauring, 2011), this assumption does not account for the gendered nature of that support. For male expatriates, marriage often reinforces traditional societal expectations: they are seen as the primary breadwinners, while their spouses assume most domestic and caregiving duties (Eagly & Steffen, 1986). This arrangement allows male expatriates to conserve personal resources, such as time and energy (Halbesleben et al., 2014), and redirect them toward professional adjustment and performance abroad (Linehan & Scullion, 2004).

In contrast, marriage can be a source of additional stress and resource depletion for female expatriates. Research shows that female expatriates are more likely to prioritize the integration and well-being of their spouses and families (Hutchings et al., 2010; Mayrhofer & Scullion, 2002), sometimes at the expense of their work focus and adjustment. Societal expectations that women should fulfill caregiving roles compound these challenges, increase their allostatic load, and drain critical resources needed for successful adjustment. Additionally, male expatriate spouses may lack the skills or experience needed to support their partners effectively, given their traditional roles (Harvey & Wiese, 1998). Frustration and loss of confidence among these spouses, particularly if they are unable to work in the new country, can exacerbate stress for female expatriates (Mayrhofer & Scullion, 2002; Selmer & Lauring, 2011). Adding to these difficulties, host-country cultural biases may intensify negative perceptions toward married female expatriates. They may be perceived as less competent or committed, especially if they have visible family obligations (Linehan & Scullion, 2004). Even the anticipation of future childrearing responsibilities can contribute to prejudices that limit their access to resources in the workplace (Jordan & Zitek, 2012; Selmer & Lauring, 2011). Taken together, marriage, which may act as a resource for male expatriates, often contributes to cumulative resource loss for female expatriates.

Recognizing these challenges, scholars have repeatedly called for more organizational support for female expatriates (Fischlmayr and Puchmüller, 2016; Shen & Jiang, 2015), especially for those who are married (Mayrhofer & Scullion, 2002). Nevertheless, progress in this area remains limited (Bader et al., 2023). As a result, female expatriates must draw on a deeper reservoir of personal resources to succeed in their roles. Married female expatriates, who face a dual burden of intensified professional and domestic responsibilities, require greater personal resources to compensate for reduced organizational or spousal support. Indeed, female expatriates are not passive recipients of structural constraints. Janssens et al. (2006) note that a nuanced understanding of their situation prompts proactive repositioning actions taken by female expatriates, allowing them to reclaim agency in their workplaces. This perspective aligns with the resource investment principle of COR theory, which highlights individual agency in coping with stress (Hobfoll, 1989). The theory suggests that individuals actively shape their lives by anticipating future goals, assessing environmental challenges, and taking steps to enhance their resources while minimizing potential losses (Halbesleben et al., 2014; Hobfoll, 2001). Given the long-term nature of expatriation, which spans pre-departure preparation, time spent abroad, and repatriation (Black et al., 1991), female expatriates may engage in continuous monitoring and evaluation of their resources, planning and acquiring new resources to address anticipated adjustment challenges. For example, inadequate pre-departure training and a lack of support from organizations and HCNs may signal to female expatriates that investing personal resources is essential for successful adjustment. Similarly, married female expatriates, aware of their heightened family responsibilities, may proactively invest in personal resources to compensate for insufficient organizational or spouse support. These behaviors suggest that resource investment for female expatriates is not only about adaptation, but also a compensatory strategy shaped by structural barriers. Thus, COR theory provides a comprehensive lens for understanding both the resource loss mechanisms female expatriates encounter and the proactive strategies they employ to navigate complex

expatriate environments.

2.3. Personal resources and expatriate adjustment

Expatriate management literature identifies numerous personal resources that support expatriates' CCA (Lazarova et al., 2010). This research focuses on three key resources based on Caligiuri and Lazarova's (2002) theoretical framework, which highlights personal, cultural, and situational constraints for female expatriates. First, personal constraints involve personality traits that influence female expatriates' ability to engage with HCNs, where extraversion emerges as particularly crucial (Caligiuri & Lazarova, 2002). Second, cultural constraints refer to the cultural norms in the host country that may restrict female expatriates' social interactions. CQ is thus essential for functioning effectively in diverse cultural settings (Earley & Ang, 2003; Han et al., 2022; Lee & Sukoco, 2010). Third, situational constraints pertain to the knowledge of the host-country language, which supports female expatriates' adjustment by facilitating communication and reducing misunderstandings (Caligiuri & Lazarova, 2002). While these traits are crucial for all expatriates, they are especially significant for female expatriates, given the additional social and cultural challenges they encounter. The following sections discuss the effects of these resources on expatriate interaction adjustment, with a particular focus on female expatriates.

2.3.1. Extraversion

Extraversion, characterized by outgoing, talkative, assertive, and gregarious behaviors, is a key predictor of CCA among the Big Five personality traits (Han et al., 2022; Harari et al., 2018). Extraverted expatriates tend to adjust better due to their willingness to engage with new cultures and comfort in interacting with HCNs (Harari et al., 2018). These interactions facilitate the exchange of information, the development of social networks, and the establishment of close relationships, which provide emotional support during international relocation (Leiba-O'Sullivan, 1999; Shaffer et al., 2006).

Extraversion is particularly beneficial for female expatriates in contexts characterized by traditional gender norms, where they can use their sociability to build networks crucial for gaining support and resources that may otherwise be inaccessible (Janssens et al., 2006). By proactively engaging with male colleagues and local professionals, extraverted female expatriates can challenge traditional gender stereotypes (Han et al., 2022), demonstrate their competence, and establish a strong presence in the workplace. This visibility and active participation help mitigate biases and prejudices, supporting their adjustment and enhancing their effectiveness (Caligiuri & Lazarova, 2002).

2.3.2. Cultural intelligence (CQ)

CQ encompasses cognitive, metacognitive, motivational, and behavioral capabilities (Ang et al., 2007). Cognitive CQ involves knowledge and understanding of cultural differences, enabling expatriates to anticipate and adjust to cultural expectations (Earley & Ang, 2003). Metacognitive CQ involves strategic planning and adaptation, allowing expatriates to navigate unexpected situational demands and devise effective solutions with cultural self-awareness and cognitive flexibility (Ang et al., 2007). Motivational CQ fosters persistence and resilience in intercultural settings (Chen et al., 2010), while behavioral CQ ensures culturally appropriate behaviors during interactions (Ang et al., 2007).

CQ is an important resource for female expatriates (France et al., 2019). High cognitive CQ helps them understand the deep-seated cultural norms and gender expectations, while metacognitive CQ enables them to adjust their behaviors strategically. Motivational CQ provides the resilience needed to overcome gender-specific challenges, and behavioral CQ allows for culturally sensitive communication, which fosters positive relationships with HCNs. By leveraging CQ, female expatriates can adeptly navigate societal biases and demonstrate their

competence and professionalism in culturally resonant ways (Janssens et al., 2006). This personal resource may also help shift local perceptions about female leaders, enhancing their effectiveness and credibility (Caligiuri & Lazarova, 2002).

2.3.3. Host-country language ability

Language proficiency is a critical resource for expatriates, as it facilitates adjustment by easing the acquisition of information, understanding local norms and values, and fostering effective relationships with HCNs (Panda et al., 2022; Selmer, 2006). Without sufficient language skills, expatriates risk isolation and mental distress (Ren et al., 2014). High language proficiency enhances interaction adjustment by enabling more frequent and meaningful conversations with HCNs (Caligiuri & Lazarova, 2002).

Proficiency in the local language is particularly important for female expatriates in societies with strong traditional gender norms (Caligiuri & Lazarova, 2002; Hutchings et al., 2013). It empowers them to overcome cultural biases and enhances their credibility and competence at work. Proficiency enables full participation in both formal meetings and informal social gatherings, thereby increasing their visibility, influence, and access to critical support networks. Thus, language proficiency serves as a powerful resource for female expatriates to assert their presence, gain respect, and adjust effectively to the host country.

2.4. Research propositions

Prior research has largely relied on gender-centric comparison, yet these studies produce inconsistent findings. Specifically, some studies show that female expatriates adjust better than males (Salamin & Davoine, 2015; Selmer & Leung, 2003), others report poorer adjustment among female expatriates (Caligiuri & Tung, 1999), and still others find no significant gender difference (Cole & McNulty, 2011; Selmer, 2001; Sinangil & Ones, 2003). These mixed results suggest that gender alone is insufficient to explain adjustment outcomes. Following a person-centered approach, we argue that cross-cultural interaction adjustment is shaped by distinct expatriate profiles that emerge from the interplay of gender, marital status, and personal traits. For example, two expatriates of the same gender may experience very different adjustment outcomes depending on whether they possess certain personal traits. Similarly, a married female expatriate may face different adjustment challenges compared to a single female expatriate, even if they share similar personal traits, due to the added demands of family responsibilities. These examples highlight the need to move beyond simplistic gender comparisons and instead examine how specific configurations of demographic factors and personal traits contribute to adjustment outcomes (Gabriel et al., 2018; Hofmans et al., 2020). By emphasizing profiles, this study adopts a person-centered approach to understand how these configurations vary and influence adjustment outcomes. We thus propose the following:

Proposition 1 Cross-cultural interaction adjustment is influenced by the interplay of gender, marital status, and personal traits, which collectively shape expatriate profiles. Gender alone cannot sufficiently explain differences in cross-cultural interaction adjustment outcomes.

Recent research has called for a closer examination of the assumption that expatriates form a homogeneous group with uniform CCA experiences (Haak-Saheem et al., 2022; Sperber & Linder, 2024; Takeuchi et al., 2019). Responding to this call, person-centered approaches suggest that individuals' personal characteristics can interact dynamically, forming subgroups with distinct profiles within a population (Gabriel et al., 2018; Hofmans et al., 2020). For example, female and male expatriates may differ in marital statuses and levels of extraversion, CQ, and host-country language ability, yet both can achieve successful interaction adjustment through different configurations of these traits. This aligns with the principle of equifinality in COR theory, which posits that different resources can create multiple pathways to the same outcome (Halbesleben et al., 2014). Accordingly, we propose:

Proposition 2 Distinct subgroups of expatriates, differentiated by gender, marital status, and personal traits, form unique profiles that explain variations in cross-cultural interaction adjustment outcomes.

From the perspective of resource loss and replacement, we argue that female expatriates may experience not only greater resource depletion but also greater difficulty in replenishing lost resources compared to their male counterparts. Societal norms, workplace biases, and culture-bound stereotypes can restrict female expatriates' access to external resources, thereby necessitating higher levels of personal resources for successful adjustment. Consequently, successful female expatriate profiles may require broader resource configurations compared to male profiles. Furthermore, married female expatriates face an even higher threshold for resource demands, as they must balance professional responsibilities with heightened familial obligations during expatriation. The dual pressures from work and family, often without sufficient organizational or societal support, may accelerate their resource depletion. Accordingly, married female expatriates are likely to require the most extensive personal resource portfolios among all expatriate subgroups. Given these insights, we propose the following:

Proposition 3. Female expatriate profiles require a broader array of personal resources compared to male profiles to achieve successful adjustment.

Proposition 4 Married female expatriate profiles necessitate the most extensive combination of personal resources compared to both male and single female expatriates to achieve successful adjustment.

3. Methods

3.1. Research context

This study is part of a broader research project examining expatriate experiences in the Czech Republic, a country that has experienced a significant rise in foreign direct investments since 2004 (Szabo, 2019). The economic growth has led to a notable influx of expatriates, with the Czech Statistical Office reporting nearly 600,000 long-term or permanent resident foreigners by the end of 2019. The country has consistently ranked among the top three destinations for expatriates since 2017, thanks to its economic prosperity, job opportunities, and work-life balance (InterNations, 2021). Despite this, few studies have explored the Czech Republic as a context for female expatriates (Bernard et al., 2014; Salamin & Davoine, 2015; Suutari & Riisala, 2001). Most research has focused on female expatriates' experiences in Asia (France et al., 2019; Selmer, 2001; Selmer & Leung, 2003), the Middle East (Hutchings et al., 2010; Rodriguez & Ridgway, 2019), and economically advanced European countries (Linehan & Scullion, 2004; Salamin & Davoine, 2015).

The Czech Republic represents a suitable context to explore effective female expatriate profiles. Although ranked highly as a desirable expatriate destination, it continues to face significant gender equality challenges. The European Union's (EU) Gender Equality Index scored the country at 57.9 in 2023, well below the EU average of 70.2, positioning it third-to-last among EU member states. As a post-socialist country, traditional gender norms remain deeply ingrained (Ferrarini, 2006). These norms often lead to societal expectations that female employees prioritize family over their careers, limiting women's decision-making power and placing disproportionate caregiving burdens on them compared to men (EU Gender Equality Index, 2023). Despite efforts to improve gender equality, including adherence to OECD recommendations, significant gender gaps persist in areas such as labor market segregation, earnings, leadership in public life, and the prevalence of gender-based violence (OECD, 2023). This cultural and institutional backdrop provides a valuable setting to investigate the resource demands for female expatriates and how they navigate adjustment challenges using their personal resources.

3.2. Data collection and sample

We employed a computerized self-administered questionnaire in English for data collection. To ensure the clarity of the questionnaire, we conducted a pilot study with ten participants, leading to minor adjustments. Due to the lack of a comprehensive database, this research, similar to other expatriate studies in the Czech Republic (e.g., Bernard et al., 2014), could not ensure the participants in the survey were a representative sample of the target population. In addition, it has been proven difficult to collect expatriate responses from the Central and Eastern European contexts, such as the Czech Republic (Suutari & Riisala, 2001). As such, we followed the common practices in expatriate research and reached out to the human resources (HR) departments of multinational companies in the country through emails and phone calls (e.g., Lee & Sukoco, 2010; Reiche et al., 2023). Successful cases involved HR departments forwarding an introductory email along with a questionnaire link to their expatriate employees. Nine multinational companies took part in our study. Since the survey distribution was handled by the organizations, we were unable to track the number of invitations sent out, making it impossible to determine the response rate. At the end of the survey, we received a total of 210 responses, of which 106 were complete and usable. Table 1 provides an overview of the characteristics of our research participants.

3.3. Measures

The participants indicated their gender (with "1" representing male and "2" representing female) and marital status (with "1" representing single and "2" representing married) on the survey. We employed Black and Stephens' (1989) 2-item scale to measure the outcome of this study, i.e., cross-cultural interaction adjustment. We measured participants' extraversion using Goldberg et al.'s (2006) 10-item International Personality Item Pool. Participants' CQ was measured using Ang et al.'s (2007) 20-item Cultural Intelligence Scale. The participants' host-country language skill was measured based on their perceived Czech language fluency. All items utilized a 5-point Likert scale. We then took the average of all Likert scale items as the measure for the outcome and antecedent conditions. All items for these constructs are available in Appendix A.

We assessed common method bias by employing Harman's one-factor test (Podsakoff et al., 2003). The analysis revealed that the first factor accounted for only 29.19 % of the total variance. This indicates that no single factor dominates the variance in the data, suggesting that common method bias is not a concern in this study.

Table 1
Descriptive statistics of participants.

Variable	Category	Frequency	Percentage
Survey participants (n = 106)			
Gender	Female	32	30 %
	Male	74	70 %
Marital status	Single	60	57 %
	Married	46	43 %
Age	Under 30	37	35 %
	31–50	66	62 %
	Above 50	3	3 %
Home country region	Europe	83	78 %
	Rest of the world	23	22 %
Education	High School	11	10 %
	Diploma/Certificate	24	23 %
	Undergraduate	58	55 %
	Degree		
Years of expatriate experience	Postgraduate Degree	13	12 %
	Less than 1	5	5 %
	1–5 years	48	45 %
	6–10 years	35	33 %
	More than 10 years	18	17 %

3.4. Data analysis

Following Gabriel et al. (2018), this study conducted a fuzzy-set Qualitative Comparative Analysis (fsQCA) to address our person-centered research questions. FsQCA is well-suited for examining how multiple conditions combine to produce an outcome of interest (Ragin, 2008). Unlike the prevailing variable-centered approaches in other gender studies, which typically assess whether gender is a statistically significant variable (e.g., Caligiuri & Tung, 1999; Salamin & Davoine, 2015; Selmer & Leung, 2003), fsQCA allows for a more comprehensive exploration of how various conditions interplay. While regression-based methods with interaction terms can handle up to three factors, fsQCA can manage more intricate interdependencies involving more than three conditions (Fainshmidt et al., 2020). Additionally, fsQCA can identify multiple configurations of conditions that lead to the same outcome (Fainshmidt et al., 2020; Gabriel et al., 2018; Ragin, 2008), enabling us to uncover distinct subgroups within the expatriate population. Recent work has demonstrated the value of fsQCA in finding patterns in data that reveal the coexistence of multiple subgroups within a population (Gabriel et al., 2018; Ong & Johnson, 2023).

Furthermore, fsQCA offers a nuanced understanding of the relationships between conditions and the outcome of interest by revealing how the configurations that lead to a positive outcome differ from those leading to a negative one. This allows us to explore the resource configurations associated with successful interaction adjustment as well as those that contribute to maladjustment among female expatriates—insights that are often difficult to capture using conventional regression-based analyses (Fainshmidt et al., 2020). Finally, fsQCA is designed to analyze small and medium-sized samples (Ragin, 2008), making it a suitable choice for our study.

3.4.1. Calibration

FsQCA is a stepwise approach, starting with calibrating or transforming raw data into set membership scores. There are two types of sets in fsQCA: crisp sets and fuzzy sets. Crisp sets convert binary variables into set membership scores of either 1 or 0. In this study, gender and marital status are calibrated as crisp sets due to their dichotomous nature. “Male” and “married” are coded as 1, while “female” and “single” are coded as 0. Conversely, fuzzy sets use membership scores that range from 0 to 1. The calibration of fuzzy sets utilizes a direct method that calculates three qualitative anchors: full membership, the cross-over point, and full non-membership (Ragin, 2008; Schneider & Wagemann, 2012). These thresholds should ideally be derived from informed judgment, theoretical considerations, and case-specific contexts (Ragin, 2008). However, due to the absence of universally accepted thresholds (Rutten, 2020), we adhered to the common fsQCA practice of using percentile scores of 5th, 50th, and 95th as three qualitative anchor points to calibrate the outcome (i.e., cross-cultural interaction adjustment) and other conditions (i.e., extraversion, CQ, and host-country language ability) into fuzzy sets (Table 2). To avoid dropping any cases with the exact score of 0.5, which is the crossover membership score, we added a constant of 0.001 to all scores below full membership, following Fiss (2011).

3.4.2. Necessity analysis

Necessity analysis is conducted to identify conditions that are necessary for the occurrence or absence of the outcome. Table 3 shows

Table 2
Three qualitative anchors.

Condition	Non-membership	Cross-over	Full membership
Interaction adjustment	1.5	4	5
Extraversion	1.7	3.2	4.7
CQ	2.95	3.75	4.65
Language	1	3	4

Table 3
Analysis of necessary conditions.

Conditions	High Interaction Adjustment		Low Interaction Adjustment	
	Consistency	Coverage	Consistency	Coverage
Gender	0.70	0.48	0.70	0.52
~Gender	0.30	0.49	0.30	0.51
Marriage	0.40	0.44	0.47	0.58
~Marriage	0.60	0.51	0.53	0.48
Extraversion	0.67	0.57	0.57	0.51
~Extraversion	0.42	0.48	0.52	0.63
CQ	0.63	0.61	0.58	0.60
~CQ	0.58	0.56	0.62	0.64
Language	0.77	0.75	0.46	0.48
~Language	0.46	0.45	0.76	0.78

the results of the necessity analyses for both high interaction adjustment (i.e., the presence of interaction adjustment) and low interaction adjustment (i.e., the absence of interaction adjustment). With the consistency score threshold of 0.9 (Schneider & Wagemann, 2012), we do not find any prerequisite condition that solely triggers the high or low interaction adjustment outcome.

3.4.3. Sufficiency analysis

Based on the calibrated data, we used the fsQCA software to create two truth tables for the high and low interaction adjustment. Each truth table consists of 32 rows – representing all possible combinations made from five conditions. This study sets the frequency cut-off point at 1, meaning that only rows with at least one empirical observation are retained for the analysis. The outcome for each row is coded as 1 if it simultaneously satisfied two thresholds, namely (1) raw consistency score must be equal or higher than 0.80, and (2) PRI consistency score must be equal or higher than 0.75. These thresholds are higher than the recommended fsQCA literature, which allows us to ascertain prevalent configurations leading to the high and low interaction adjustment (Greckhamer et al., 2018; Schneider & Wagemann, 2012).

After coding the outcome values in the truth tables, we proceeded with sufficiency analysis for the presence and the absence of interaction adjustment. Technically, this is known as the logical minimization process that produces three types of solution depending on how logical remainders—referring to configurations without any empirical observation—are treated. The most complex solution does not take any logical remainders into consideration, while the most parsimonious solution only uses those that help to achieve parsimony. Thus, this study follows the fsQCA practice to report the intermediate solution as it strikes a balance between parsimony and complexity (Ragin, 2008; Schneider & Wagemann, 2012). Table 4 shows the configurations for high interaction adjustment, and Table 5 shows the absence of the outcome (i.e., low interaction adjustment). Importantly, by comparing

Table 4
Configurations for High Interaction Adjustment.

Configuration	Solutions (High Interaction Adjustment)				
	A1	A2	A3	A4	A5
Gender	●	●			⊗
Marriage	⊗		⊗	⊗	●
Extraversion		●	⊗	●	●
CQ		⊗	●	⊗	●
Language	●	●	●	●	●
Consistency	0.87	0.96	0.92	0.98	0.89
Raw Coverage	0.31	0.27	0.23	0.23	0.06
Unique Coverage	0.099	0.118	0.032	0.033	0.059
Overall solution consistency	0.89				
Overall solution coverage	0.60				

Note: *Black circles indicate the presence of a condition, and circles with “x” indicate its absence. Large circles indicate core conditions; small ones indicate peripheral conditions. Blank spaces indicate “don’t care”.

Table 5
Configurations for low interaction adjustment.

Configuration	Solutions (Low Interaction Adjustment)				
	B1	B2	B3	B4	B5
Gender	●	●	⊗	⊗	⊗
Marriage		●	●	●	
Extraversion	⊗	⊗		⊗	●
CQ	●		●	⊗	⊗
Language	⊗	⊗	⊗	●	⊗
Consistency	0.92	0.90	1	0.96	0.97
Raw Coverage	0.268	0.213	0.059	0.052	0.112
Unique Coverage	0.125	0.071	0.015	0.016	0.065
Overall solution consistency	0.92				
Overall solution coverage	0.48				

Note: *Black circles indicate the presence of a condition, and circles with “x” indicate its absence. Large circles indicate core conditions; small ones indicate peripheral conditions. Blank spaces indicate “don’t care”.

intermediate and parsimonious solutions, we can identify core conditions that exert a stronger effect on the outcome (Fiss, 2011). These core conditions appear in both parsimonious and intermediate solutions, whereas the peripheral conditions only appear in the intermediate solution.

4. Findings

Our analysis identified five configurations leading to high interaction adjustment and five configurations leading to low interaction adjustment. All configurations surpass the recommended consistency threshold of 0.80 (Ragin, 2008). The overall solution coverage for high interaction adjustment (0.60) and low interaction adjustment (0.48) demonstrates that a substantial proportion of cases associated with these outcomes can be explained by the identified profiles.

4.1. High interaction adjustment configurations

4.1.1. A1 and A2: Well-adjusted male expatriates

Configurations A1 and A2 represent profiles for well-adjusted male expatriates. A1 suggests that single male expatriates achieve high interaction adjustment primarily through proficiency in the local language, without the necessity of high CQ or extraversion. This indicates that language proficiency alone can be a powerful tool for integration in the host country for single males. In contrast, A2 reveals that male expatriates, regardless of their marital status, achieve high interaction adjustment through a combination of extraversion and high language ability, even in the absence of CQ. The difference between these two profiles suggests that extraversion enhances interaction adjustment for those male expatriates who might already have a strong language foundation, irrespective of marital status.

4.1.2. A3 and A4: Gender-neutral profiles

Configurations A3 and A4 indicate that both single male and female expatriates can achieve high interaction adjustment through two combinations of personal resources. A3 shows that a combination of CQ and language ability, in the absence of extraversion, is sufficient for high interaction adjustment. Conversely, A4 demonstrates that extraversion combined with language ability, but without CQ, also leads to successful adjustment. These findings highlight resource substitution, where CQ and extraversion can compensate for each other to achieve the same outcome. However, an important difference is that, while single male expatriates can succeed with language proficiency alone (A1), single female expatriates require an additional resource—either extraversion or CQ—to reach the same level of interaction adjustment.

4.1.3. A5: Married female expatriates

Configuration A5 indicates that married female expatriates achieve

high interaction adjustment only when all three personal resources—extraversion, CQ, and language ability—are present. This requirement underscores a higher threshold for adjustment success compared to other profiles (i.e., A1, A2, A3, and A4), which succeed with fewer resources.

4.2. Low interaction adjustment configurations

4.2.1. B1 and B2: Maladjusted male expatriates

For low interaction adjustment, configuration B1 and B2 pertain to male expatriates. B1 indicates that low interaction adjustment results from the presence of CQ and the absence of extraversion and language ability, suggesting that CQ alone is insufficient for successful adjustment. This contrasts with A3, which shows that high interaction adjustment is achieved when CQ is complemented by language ability.

B2 shows that married male expatriates experience low interaction adjustment when both extraversion and language proficiency are absent, irrespective of their CQ. Compared to A2, where married male expatriates succeed with a combination of extraversion and language skills, B2 highlights the crucial roles of these traits in achieving successful interaction adjustment. This finding reinforces that, while marriage may provide emotional support, it does not necessarily enhance interaction adjustment for male expatriates.

4.2.2. B3, B4, and B5: Female expatriates

Configurations B3 and B4 indicate that married female expatriates experience low interaction adjustment when they lack multiple personal resources. B3 shows that CQ alone, without language ability or extraversion, is insufficient, while B4 reveals that language proficiency alone, without CQ or extraversion, also fails to support successful adjustment. B5 highlights that female expatriates, regardless of marital status, face significant adjustment challenges when they rely solely on extraversion without CQ and language ability.

4.3. Robustness test

We followed Arellano et al. (2021) and conducted three robustness tests for high and low interaction adjustment, respectively. These tests are: (1) lower the consistency thresholds (Test 1), (2) increase the consistency thresholds (Test 2), and (3) alternative calibration (Test 3). The results are reported in Tables 6 and 7. Following the tests, some minor changes were observed. Some solutions do not appear after increasing the consistency cut-off, which is expected given the case-sensitive nature of fsQCA (Schneider & Wagemann, 2012). However, these changes do not affect the overall interpretation of our findings. In addition, solutions for the presence of interaction adjustment are different from the ones associated with low adjustment, providing additional robustness to our results. We therefore conclude that our reported configurations have a high level of robustness.

5. Discussion

Our findings provide strong empirical support for our four research propositions. Specifically, the observed expatriate profiles illustrate multiple pathways to both successful and unsuccessful adjustment, none of which are determined by gender alone. Instead, adjustment outcomes depend on specific resource configurations, influenced by gender and marital status. These findings strongly support the adoption of a person-centered approach over simplistic gender-based comparisons, thereby supporting Proposition 1. Our results also support Proposition 2, which posits that expatriates do not adjust through a single, universal pathway but rather through distinct subgroups with different resource configurations. The presence of multiple effective (i.e., A1–A5) and ineffective (i.e., B1–B5) profiles among male and female expatriates demonstrates that multiple resource pathways can lead to similar adjustment outcomes.

Table 6

Robustness check summary for high interaction adjustment.

Reported configurations								
No.			A1	A2	A3	A4	A5	
Label core configuration								
Robustness tests								
Test No.	Test type	Test category						
1	Lower consistency cut-off: Raw consistency cut-off: 0.76 PRI consistency cut-off: 0.72	Lenient	Identical	Identical	Identical	Identical	Identical	Identical
2	Increase consistency cut-off: Raw consistency cut-off: 0.93 PRI consistency cut-off: 0.84	Conservative	Identical	Does not appear	Does not appear	Does not appear	Does not appear	Identical
3	Use 10–50–90 percentile for three qualitative anchors	Alternative	Very similar	Does not appear	Does not appear	Identical	Identical	Identical

Note:
We follow [Arellano et al. \(2021\)](#) to evaluate changes in the robustness tests in comparison with our results as follows: (1) “Identical” indicates the configuration remains identical. (2) “Very similar” indicates change in only one condition, such as the addition of one condition or the substitution of another condition. (3) “Similar” indicates change in more than one condition, but there is no significant change in the core conditions. (4) “Does not appear” indicates that the reported configuration does not appear in the robustness test.

Table 7

Robustness check summary for low interaction adjustment.

Reported configurations								
No.			B1	B2	B3	B4	B5	
Label core configuration								
Robustness tests								
Test No.	Test type	Test category						
1	Lower consistency cut-off: Raw consistency cut-off: 0.86 PRI consistency cut-off: 0.7	Lenient	Identical	Very similar	Very similar	Identical	Identical	Identical
2	Increase consistency cut-off: Raw consistency cut-off: 0.93 PRI consistency cut-off: 0.84	Conservative	Identical	Does not appear	Does not appear	Identical	Identical	Identical
3	Use 10–50–90 percentile for three qualitative anchors	Alternative	Does not appear	Identical	Identical	Identical	Identical	Identical

Note:
We follow [Arellano et al. \(2021\)](#) to evaluate changes in the robustness tests in comparison with our results as follows: (1) “Identical” indicates the configuration remains identical. (2) “Very similar” indicates change in only one condition, such as the addition of one condition or the substitution of another condition. (3) “Similar” indicates change in more than one condition, but there is no significant change in the core conditions. (4) “Does not appear” indicates that the reported configuration does not appear in the robustness test.

Our findings further substantiate Proposition 3 by demonstrating that female expatriates require a broader array of resources than their male counterparts. While single male expatriates can succeed with only language proficiency (A1), single female expatriates require either CQ (A3) or extraversion (A4) in addition to language proficiency. Additionally, the low-adjustment configurations (B3, B4, and B5) reinforce this finding. Female expatriates struggle significantly when they lack multiple resources, particularly when relying solely on CQ (B3), language proficiency (B4), or extraversion (B5) without complementary traits. These results confirm that female expatriates must navigate more resource-intensive pathways to achieve similar adjustment outcomes as their male counterparts.

Our results also provide strong support for Proposition 4, as married female expatriates (A5) must possess all three personal resources—extraversion, CQ, and language proficiency—to achieve high interaction adjustment. This requirement sets them apart from other expatriate subgroups, indicating that marriage introduces additional adjustment challenges that necessitate a more comprehensive resource portfolio. Further support is provided by low-adjustment profiles (B3 and B4), which reveal that married female expatriates struggle significantly when they lack multiple resources.

An additional insight from our findings is the important role of language proficiency in shaping adjustment outcomes. This personal trait appears in all high adjustment configurations, underscoring its foundational role in enabling expatriates to navigate social and

professional interactions effectively. Its absence in most low adjustment configurations highlights the difficulty of compensating for this resource, even when other traits like CQ or extraversion are present. Thus, our findings offer several theoretical contributions, advancing understanding in expatriate management, COR theory, and the interplay of personal traits in CCA.

5.1. Theoretical implications

First, our research highlights the value of adopting a person-centered approach in expatriate management. Unlike prevailing variable-centered approaches, our method emphasizes the interdependent and synergistic effects of gender, marital status, and personal traits on expatriate CCA. Our findings demonstrate that these individual attributes form distinct profiles, each associated with specific interaction adjustment outcomes, moving beyond the linear relationships often emphasized in traditional approaches. This aligns with prior research, which suggests gender alone does not fully explain female expatriates' CCA experiences but points to a complex interplay of factors ([Mayrhofer & Scullion, 2002](#)). By integrating multiple attributes simultaneously, our person-centered approach reconciles the mixed findings of previous gender-centric studies, offering a more holistic understanding of expatriate adjustment. This perspective also underscores the existence of distinct subgroups within the expatriate population ([Haak-Saheem et al., 2022; Takeuchi et al., 2019](#)). It cautions against the limitations of

variable-centered approaches, which risk oversimplifying expatriate experiences. We thus advocate for the broader adoption of person-centered approaches in future expatriate research to better capture the complexity and diversity of adjustment processes (Takeuchi et al., 2019).

Second, our research extends COR theory by refining how resource loss and investment processes operate within gendered expatriation contexts (Halbesleben et al., 2014). We theorize that gendered cultural norms and societal expectations create structural and cumulative resource loss for female expatriates, requiring them to invest in more personal resources simply to attain similar outcomes as their male counterparts. Moreover, marriage further exacerbates resource loss for female expatriates, as balancing professional and family obligations in unfamiliar cultural environments intensifies allostatic load and resource depletion. Our findings emphasize the agency of female expatriates in proactively managing contextual demands through resource planning and investment. Thus, we extend COR theory by showing that resource accumulation for female expatriates is not merely about replenishment but about systematically compensating for structural disadvantages embedded in expatriate environments.

Third, our research further enriches COR theory by expanding the equifinality principle, demonstrating that adjustment success results from different configurations of personal resources conditioned by gender, marital status, and contextual demands. Our findings reveal that expatriates from varied demographic backgrounds—female, male, single, and married—can all reach high levels of adjustment, though they navigate different resource configurations to do so. This moves beyond the traditional interpretation of equifinality as the substitution of different *individual* resources (Halbesleben et al., 2014; Reiche et al., 2023), showing instead that it is the *configuration* of multiple personal resources that enables successful adjustment. Importantly, while equifinal combinations exist, they do not operate uniformly across demographic groups. Specifically, while male expatriates can achieve adjustment success with a smaller set of personal resources, female expatriates must invest in a broader and more integrated portfolio to overcome societal and cultural challenges and achieve comparable outcomes. Thus, the substitutability of resource configurations is contingent on gender, marital status, and environmental demands. These insights enrich and extend COR theory by highlighting that equifinality in expatriate adjustment is a configuration-based, asymmetrical phenomenon shaped by broader social and institutional structures.

Finally, our research challenges trait essentialism in expatriate management by highlighting the conditional nature of trait substitutability and the interdependent dynamics among personal resources. Prior research often treats personal traits as independent or competing factors, with certain traits, such as extraversion, portrayed as universally “must-have” characteristics for adjustment success (Leiba-O’Sullivan, 1999; Shaffer et al., 2006). Our findings complicate this narrative by demonstrating that while certain traits like CQ and extraversion can, in some cases, substitute for one another, their effectiveness is highly contingent on the presence of other enabling resources, particularly language proficiency. Language ability consistently emerges as a foundational trait across all high adjustment profiles and proves difficult to compensate for when absent. This insight emphasizes that the value of any given trait depends not only on its individual contribution but also on its interaction with other traits. We therefore call for a more integrated approach to expatriate management—one that moves beyond viewing traits in isolation and instead considers their combinatory and context-dependent effects.

5.2. Practical implications

This study offers some practical implications for expatriate selection and the enhancement of CCA. First, our findings demonstrate that both female and male expatriates are equally effective in international

assignments, albeit through distinct resource configurations. Organizations that overlook female candidates risk missing out on a valuable talent pool, especially at a time when recruiting suitable employees willing to relocate is increasingly challenging (Ererdi et al., 2022). Although it may appear less costly to invest in male expatriates, this short-term view neglects the broader, long-term benefits of gender diversity in expatriate management (Bader et al., 2023). Gender diversity fosters enhanced problem-solving, innovation, and decision-making within teams, and it strengthens organizations’ global capabilities and reputation (Linehan & Scullion, 2004). Organizations should therefore actively work to eliminate bias in expatriate selection and adopt gender-inclusive strategies that fully leverage the benefits of a diverse workforce.

Second, our research highlights the need for organizations to tailor their support and management strategies to specific expatriate profiles, avoiding a one-size-fits-all approach (Bader et al., 2023). For example, single female expatriates may benefit from training programs to enhance CQ and language skills (Earley & Ang, 2003; Panda et al., 2022), while single male expatriates may prioritize language training. Married female expatriates, who face the highest adjustment thresholds, require comprehensive support across all resource dimensions. Organizations should establish robust support systems, including family integration programs and childcare support, to address the unique demands faced by married female expatriates (Bader et al., 2023). Flexible work arrangements and spousal support services can further alleviate stress and enhance adjustment (Puchmüller and Fischlmayr, 2017). By aligning profile-specific strategies with targeted resource allocation, organizations can maximize the effectiveness and retention of expatriates.

Finally, our research highlights the strategic importance of adopting a person-centered approach in expatriate selection and management. Rather than viewing weaknesses in candidates’ profiles (Mayrhofer & Scullion, 2002), such as low CQ or language proficiency, as barriers to adjustment, organizations should consider the compensatory effects among strengths and weaknesses. By harnessing the full spectrum of demographic diversity, skills, and competencies within the expatriate workforce, organizations can foster a more supportive and inclusive environment conducive to effective global mobility.

5.3. Limitations and future research

Despite our contributions, this study has some limitations that suggest avenues for future research. First, our cross-sectional research design only captured expatriates’ perspectives at a single point in time. While common in expatriate management research (e.g., Lee & Sukoco, 2010; Salamin & Davoine, 2015), this approach limits our ability to observe changes over time. Future research could adopt a longitudinal design to provide a more dynamic view of expatriate CCA, identifying evolving profiles and offering insights into how female expatriates’ personal resources develop and influence adjustment over time (Halbesleben et al., 2014).

Second, our research focused on a single-country setting—the Czech Republic—which limits the generalizability of our findings. Future research could conduct comparative studies, examining female expatriate profiles across diverse cultural and institutional environments with varying levels of gender equality to test the configurations identified in this study. For example, in cultures with higher gender egalitarianism, married female expatriates may require fewer personal resources to succeed compared to those in less egalitarian settings. Additionally, cultural distance asymmetry offers a promising direction for future research. Female expatriates moving from high-masculinity home cultures to lower-masculinity host cultures may encounter fewer gender-specific barriers, whereas those moving in the opposite direction could face amplified challenges, necessitating greater resource investment. Investigating how cultural distance asymmetry interacts with resource-based profiles would contribute to expatriation research by examining how macro-level and micro-level influences shape expatriate

adjustment in different cultural settings.

Third, like most expatriate studies, this research is subject to potential sample selection bias, as expatriates represent a distinct subgroup of individuals selected or self-selected for international assignments. Additionally, survey-based research inherently involves response bias, as participation is voluntary and beyond researchers' control. However, the variability in resource configurations observed among female expatriates—ranging from profiles with three resources to those with only one—demonstrates that our findings capture diverse adjustment pathways rather than reflecting a homogenous or elite sample. Future research could explore the selection and self-selection mechanisms that shape the composition of expatriate populations, particularly in terms of gender representation. Longitudinal or multi-method studies could investigate how selection biases influence expatriate resource accumulation and adjustment trajectories over time. Furthermore, comparative studies across different industries or organizational contexts could provide deeper insights into whether and how selection bias affects female expatriates' access to international opportunities and their subsequent adjustment experiences.

Fourth, our study focused on identifying expatriate profiles for interaction adjustment due to its significance for female expatriates. However, the same resources may affect other outcomes differently (Halbesleben et al., 2014). Future research should examine expatriate profiles concerning various outcomes, such as work adjustment, job satisfaction, and performance (Bhaskar-Shrinivas et al., 2005). To deepen the understanding of these profiles, future research should continue employing person-centered approaches, with fsQCA as a methodological tool, to capture the complexity of these phenomena. Additionally, incorporating follow-up interviews with expatriates from specific profiles could provide richer insights and illustrative examples that complement the fsQCA findings (Fainshmidt et al., 2020). These personal narratives would not only enhance the credibility of the results but also facilitate practical knowledge transfer to organizations by offering real-world applications of the findings.

Finally, our research represents a first step in exploring the many subgroups within the expatriate population. Future research could further investigate the subgroups of married expatriates by considering additional factors, such as expatriate spouses' employment status and caregiving responsibilities for children. For instance, unemployed

spouses may experience feelings of isolation or frustration, negatively impacting the expatriates' well-being and adjustment (Selmer & Lauring, 2011). Similarly, expatriates with children may face difficulties related to childcare, education systems, and increased demands on their time and energy (Reiche et al., 2021). These additional factors could exacerbate stress and resource depletion, influencing the dynamics of resource loss and gain. By addressing these elements, researchers can develop a more holistic understanding of the expatriate experience and offer more tailored recommendations for organizations to effectively support their expatriate employees.

6. Conclusion

This study advances expatriate management research by adopting a person-centered approach to understand expatriate CCA. Moving beyond traditional gender comparisons, we uncover the complex interplay of individual factors in shaping expatriate adjustment. Our findings extend COR theory by demonstrating how resource loss and investment processes operate differently for female expatriates and by expanding the equifinality principle to a configuration-based perspective. Moreover, we challenge trait essentialism by showing that personal traits interact in compensatory but context-dependent ways. In doing so, we provide a more nuanced understanding of expatriate adjustment and offer important insights for theory development and practical interventions in expatriate management.

CRedit authorship contribution statement

Lianghui Lei: Writing – review & editing, Writing – original draft, Software, Project administration, Methodology, Investigation, Formal analysis, Data curation, Conceptualization. **Thi Alice Ngo:** Investigation, Data curation, Conceptualization. **Honglan Yu:** Writing – review & editing, Writing – original draft, Visualization, Validation, Supervision, Methodology, Investigation, Formal analysis, Data curation. **Kweku Adams:** Writing – review & editing, Writing – original draft, Supervision, Project administration, Methodology, Formal analysis, Data curation, Conceptualization. **Ondřej Částek:** Writing – review & editing, Writing – original draft, Validation, Software, Formal analysis, Data curation.

Appendix A. Measurement items and factor loadings

Constructs	
Interaction Adjustment ($\alpha = 0.88$)	
IA1.	Interacting with Czechs in daily life.
IA2.	Working with Czechs outside your company.
Extraversion ($\alpha = 0.9$)	
EXV1.	I feel comfortable around people.
EXV2.	I make friends easily.
EXV3.	I am skilled in handling social situations.
EXV4.	I am the life of the party.
EXV5.	I carry the conversation to a higher level.
EXV6.	I know how to captivate people.
EXV7.	I have little to say.
EXV8.	I don't like to draw attention to myself.
EXV9.	I don't talk a lot.
EXV10.	I keep in the background.
Metacognitive CQ ($\alpha = 0.86$)	
MECQ1.	I am conscious of the cultural knowledge I use when interacting with people with different cultural backgrounds.
MECQ2.	I adjust my cultural knowledge as I interact with people from a culture that is unfamiliar to me.
MECQ3.	I am conscious of the cultural knowledge I apply to cross-cultural interactions.
MECQ4.	I check the accuracy of my cultural knowledge as I interact with people from different cultures
Cognitive CQ ($\alpha = 0.85$)	
CCQ1.	I know the legal and economic systems of other cultures.
CCQ2.	I know the cultural values and religious beliefs of other cultures.
CCQ3.	I know the marriage systems of other cultures.
CCQ4.	I know the arts and crafts of other cultures.

(continued on next page)

(continued)

CCQ5.	I know the rules for expressing nonverbal behaviors in other cultures.
Motivational CQ ($\alpha = 0.78$)	
MOCQ1.	I enjoy interacting with people from different cultures.
MOCQ2.	I am confident that I can socialize with locals in a culture that is unfamiliar to me.
MOCQ3.	I am sure I can deal with the stresses of adjusting to a culture that is new to me.
MOCQ4.	I enjoy living in cultures that are unfamiliar to me.
MOCQ5.	I am confident that I can get accustomed to the shopping conditions in a different culture.
Behavioral CQ ($\alpha = 0.90$)	
BCQ1.	I change my verbal behavior (e.g., accent, tone) when a cross-cultural interaction requires it.
BCQ2.	I use pause and silence differently to suit different cross-cultural situations.
BCQ3.	I vary the rate of my speaking when a cross-cultural situation requires it.
BCQ4.	I change my nonverbal behavior when a cross-cultural situation requires it.
Host-country language ability	
HCLA1.	How would you rate your overall level of Czech language?

Data availability

All data can be found in the paper. Full data can also be made available upon request.

References

- Altman, Y., & Shortland, S. (2008). Women and international assignments: Taking stock – a 25-year review. *Human Resource Management*, 47, 199–216. <https://doi.org/10.1002/hrm.20208>
- Ang, S., Van Dyne, L., Koh, C., Ng, K. Y., Templer, K. J., Tay, C., & Chandrasekar, N. A. (2007). Cultural Intelligence: Its Measurement and Effects on Cultural Judgment and Decision Making, Cultural Adaptation and Task Performance. *Management and Organization Review*, 3(3), 335–371. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1740-8784.2007.00082.x>
- Arellano, M. C., Meuer, J., & Netland, T. H. (2021). Commitment follows beliefs: A configurational perspective on operations managers' commitment to practice adoption. *Journal of Operations Management*, 67(4), 450–475. <https://doi.org/10.1002/joom.1130>
- Bader, B., Bucher, J., & Sarabi, A. (2023). Female expatriates on the move? Gender diversity management in global mobility. *Human Resource Management Journal*, 1–28. <https://doi.org/10.1111/1748-8583.12529>
- Bernard, J., Kostecký, T., & Patočková, V. (2014). The innovative regions in the Czech Republic and their position in the international labour market of highly skilled workers. *Regional Studies*, 48(10), 1691–1705. <https://doi.org/10.1080/00343404.2013.770138>
- Bhaskar-Shrinivas, P., Harrison, D. A., Shaffer, M. A., & Luk, D. M. (2005). Input-based and time-based models of international adjustment: Meta-analytic evidence and theoretical extensions. *Academy of Management Journal*, 48(2), 257–281. <https://doi.org/10.5465/AMJ.2005.16928400>
- Black, J. S., & Stephens, G. K. (1989). The influence of the spouse on American expatriate adjustment in overseas assignments. *Journal of Management*, 15(4), 529–544. <https://doi.org/10.1177/014920638901500403>
- Black, J. S., Mendenhall, M., & Oddou, G. (1991). Toward a comprehensive model of international adjustment: An integration of multiple theoretical perspectives. *Academy of Management Review*, 16(2), 291–317. <https://doi.org/10.2307/258863>
- Caligiuri, P., & Lazarova, M. (2002). A model for the influence of social interaction and social support on female expatriates' cross-cultural adjustment. *The International Journal of Human Resource Management*, 13(5), 761–772. <https://doi.org/10.1080/09585190210125903>
- Caligiuri, P., & Tung, R. L. (1999). Comparing the success of male and female expatriates from a US-based multinational company. *International Journal of Human Resource Management*, 10(5), 763–782. <https://doi.org/10.1080/095851999340143>
- Chen, G., Kirkman, B. L., Kim, K., Farh, C. C., & Tangirala, S. (2010). When does cross-cultural motivation enhance expatriate effectiveness? A multilevel investigation of the moderating roles of subsidiary support and cultural distance. *Academy of Management Journal*, 53(5), 1110–1130. <https://doi.org/10.5465/AMJ.2010.54533217>
- Cole, N., & McNulty, Y. (2011). Why do female expatriates “fit-in” better than males? An analysis of self-transcendence and socio-cultural adjustment. *Cross Cultural Management: An International Journal*, 18(2), 144–164. <https://doi.org/10.1108/13527601111125996>
- De Fruyt, F. (2002). A person-centered approach to P-E fit questions using a multiple-trait model. *Journal of Vocational Behavior*, 60(1), 73–90. <https://doi.org/10.1006/jvbe.2001.1816>
- Eagly, A. H., & Steffen, V. J. (1986). Gender and aggressive behavior: A meta-analytic review of the social psychological literature. *Psychological Bulletin*, 100(3), 309–330. <https://doi.org/10.1037/0033-2909.100.3.309>
- Earley, P. C., & Ang, S. 2003. *Cultural intelligence: individual interactions across cultures*. Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press.
- Erdi, C., Nurgabdeshev, A., Kozhakhmet, S., Rofcanin, Y., & Demirbag, M. (2022). International HRM in the context of uncertainty and crisis: A systematic review of literature (2000–2018). *International Journal of Human Resource Management*, 33(12), 2503–2540. <https://doi.org/10.1080/09585192.2020.1863247>
- European Union Gender Equality Index, 2023. Retrieved Jan 3, 2024, Retrieved from <https://eige.europa.eu/gender-equality-index/2023/CZ>.
- Fainshmidt, S., Witt, M. A., Aguilera, R. V., & Verbeke, A. (2020). The contributions of qualitative comparative analysis (QCA) to international business research. *Journal of International Business Studies*, 51, 455–466. <https://doi.org/10.1057/s41267-020-00313-1>
- Ferrarini, T. 2006. *Families, states and labour markets: Institutions, causes and consequences of family policies in post-war welfare states*. Cheltenham: Edward Elgar Publishing Limited.
- Fischlmayr, I. C., & Puchmüller, K. M. (2016). Married, mom and manager—how can this be combined with an international career? *The International Journal of Human Resource Management*, 27(7), 744–765. <https://doi.org/10.1080/09585192.2015.1111250>
- Fiss, P. C. (2011). Building better causal theories: A fuzzy set approach to typologies in organization research. *Academy of Management Journal*, 54(2), 393–420. <https://doi.org/10.5465/amj.2011.60263120>
- France, T., Booyens, L., & Baron, C. (2019). Cross-cultural professional experiences of female expatriates: Finding success through agility, resilience, and essential relationships. *Cross Cultural & Strategic Management*, 26(4), 522–545. <https://doi.org/10.1108/CCSM-05-2018-0062>
- Gabriel, A. S., Campbell, J. T., Djurdjevic, E., Johnson, R. E., & Rosen, C. C. (2018). Fuzzy profiles: Comparing and contrasting latent profile analysis and fuzzy set qualitative comparative analysis for person-centered research. *Organizational Research Methods*, 21(4), 877–904. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1094428117752466>
- Goldberg, L. R., Johnson, J. A., Eber, H. W., Hogan, R., Ashton, M. C., Cloninger, C. R., & Gough, H. G. (2006). The international personality item pool and the future of public domain personality measures. *Journal of Research in Personality*, 40(1), 84–96. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jrp.2005.08.007>
- Greckhamer, T., Furnari, S., Fiss, P. C., & Aguilera, R. V. (2018). Studying configurations with qualitative comparative analysis: Best practices in strategy and organization research. *Strategic Organization*, 16(4), 482–495. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1476127018786487>
- Haak-Saheem, W., Hutchings, K., & Brewster, C. (2022). Swimming ahead or treading water? Disaggregating the career trajectories of women self-initiated expatriates. *British Journal of Management*, 33, 864–889. <https://doi.org/10.1111/1467-8551.12465>
- Halbesleben, J. R. B., Neveu, J.-P., Paustian-Underdahl, S., & Westman, M. (2014). Getting to the “COR”: Understanding the role of resources in conservation of resources theory. *Journal of Management*, 40(5), 1334–1364. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0149206314527130>
- Han, Y., Sears, G., Darr, W. A., & Wang, Y. (2022). Facilitating cross-cultural adaptation: A meta-analytic review of dispositional predictors of expatriate adjustment. *Journal of Cross-Cultural Psychology*, 53(9), 1054–1096. <https://doi.org/10.1177/00220221221109559>
- Harari, M. B., Reaves, A. G., Beane, D. A., Laginess, A. J., & Viswesvaran, C. (2018). Personality and expatriate adjustment: A meta-analysis. *Journal of Occupational and Organizational Psychology*, 91(3), 486–517. <https://doi.org/10.1111/joop.12215>
- Harvey, M., & Wiese, D. (1998). The dual-career couple: Female expatriates and male trailing spouses. *Thunderbird International Business Review*, 40(4), 359–388. <https://doi.org/10.1002/tie.4270400404>
- Hobfoll, S. E. (1989). Conservation of resources: A new attempt at conceptualizing stress. *American Psychologist*, 44, 513–524. <https://doi.org/10.1037/0003-066X.44.3.513>
- Hobfoll, S. E. (2001). The influence of culture, community, and the nested self in the stress process: Advancing conservation of resources theory. *Applied Psychology: An International Review*, 50, 337–370. <https://doi.org/10.1111/1464-0597.00062>
- Hofmans, J., Wille, B., & Schreurs, B. (2020). Person-centered methods in vocational research. *Journal of Vocational Behavior*, 118. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jvb.2020.103398>
- Hutchings, K., Dawn Metcalfe, B., & Cooper, B. K. (2010). Exploring Arab Middle Eastern women's perceptions of barriers to, and facilitators of, international management opportunities. *International Journal of Human Resource Management*, 21(1), 61–83. <https://doi.org/10.1080/09585190903466863>

- Hutchings, K., Michailova, S., & Harrison, E. (2013). Neither ghettoed nor cosmopolitan: A study of Western women's perceptions of gender and cultural stereotyping in the United Arab Emirates. *Management International Review*, 53, 291–318. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11575-012-0144-1>
- InterNations. 2021. *Expat Insider 2021*. <https://www.internations.org/expat-insider/2021/working-abroad-index-40111>.
- Janssens, M., Cappellen, T., & Zanon, P. (2006). Successful female expatriates as agents: Positioning oneself through gender, hierarchy, and culture. *Journal of World Business*, 41(2), 133–148. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jwb.2006.01.001>
- Jordan, A. H., & Zitek, E. M. (2012). Marital status bias in perceptions of employees. *Basic and Applied Social Psychology*, 34(5), 474–481. <https://doi.org/10.1080/01973533.2012.711687>
- Lazarova, M., Westman, M., & Shaffer, M. A. (2010). Elucidating the positive side of the work-family interface on international assignments: A model of expatriate work and family performance. *The Academy of Management Review*, 35(1), 93–117. <https://doi.org/10.5465/AMR.2010.45577883>
- Lee, C. H., & Sukoco, B. M. (2010). The effects of cultural intelligence on expatriate performance: The moderating effects of international experience. *The International Journal of Human Resource Management*, 21(7), 963–981. <https://doi.org/10.1080/095851901003783397>
- Leiba-O'Sullivan, S. (1999). The Distinction between Stable and Dynamic Cross-cultural Competencies: Implications for Expatriate Trainability. *Journal of International Business Studies*, 30, 709–725. <https://doi.org/10.1057/palgrave.jibs.8490835>
- Linehan, M., & Scullion, H. (2004). Towards an understanding of the female expatriate experience in Europe. *Human Resource Management Review*, 14, 433–448. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.hrmr.2004.10.004>
- Makkonen, P. (2015). Perceived employability development of Western self-initiated expatriates in local organisations in China. *Journal of Global Mobility*, 3(4), 350–377. <https://doi.org/10.1108/JGM-05-2015-0015>
- Mayrhofer, A., & Scullion, H. (2002). Female expatriates in international business: Empirical evidence from the German clothing industry. *The International Journal of Human Resource Management*, 13(5), 815–836. <https://doi.org/10.1080/09585190210125958>
- Mercer. 2020. *2020 worldwide international assignment policies and practices*, Marsh & McLennan Companies. Retrieved Dec 29, 2023, Retrieved from <https://mobilityexchange.mercer.com/international-assignments-survey>.
- Nguyen, A., & Andresen, M. (2023). 'Many places to call home': A typology of job embeddedness among internationally relocated workers and its relationship to personal initiative, intent to stay in the host country, and intent to stay in the organization. *The International Journal of Human Resource Management*, 35(7), 1370–1402. <https://doi.org/10.1080/09585192.2023.2289497>
- OECD. 2023. Gender Equality in the Czech Republic. <https://www.oecd.org/en/publications/gender-equality-in-the-czech-republic/c5a3086f-en.html>
- Ong, W. J., & Johnson, M. D. (2023). Towards a configural theory of job demands and resources. *Academy of Management Journal*, 66(1), 195–221. <https://doi.org/10.5465/amj.2020.0493>
- Panda, M., Pradhan, R. K., & Singh, S. K. (2022). What makes organization-assigned expatriates perform in the host country? A moderated mediation analysis in the India-China context. *Journal of Business Research*, 142, 663–673. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jbusres.2022.01.010>
- Peck, J. A. (2020). The disproportionate impact of COVID-19 on women relative to men: A conservation of resources perspective. *Gender, Work & Organization*, 28(S2), 484–497. <https://doi.org/10.1111/gwao.12597>
- Podsakoff, P. M., MacKenzie, S. B., Lee, J.-Y., & Podsakoff, N. P. (2003). Common method biases in behavioral research: A critical review of the literature and recommended remedies. *Journal of Applied Psychology*, 88(5), 879–903. <https://doi.org/10.1037/0021-9010.88.5.879>
- Puchmüller, K., & Fischlmayr, I. (2017). Support for female international business travellers in dual-career families. *Journal of Global Mobility*, 5(1), 22–42. <https://doi.org/10.1108/JGM-05-2016-0023>
- Ragin, C. C. (2008). *Redesigning social inquiry: fuzzy sets and beyond*. Chicago, Ill. [u.a.]: University of Chicago Press.
- Reiche, B. S., Dimitrova, M., Westman, M., Chen, S., Wurtz, O., Lazarova, M., & Shaffer, M. A. (2023). Expatriate work role engagement and the work-family interface: A conditional crossover and spillover perspective. *Human Relations*, 76(3), 452–482. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0018726721104681>
- Ren, H., Shaffer, M. A., Harrison, D. A., Fu, C., & Fodchuk, K. M. (2014). Reactive adjustment or proactive embedding? Multistudy, multiwave evidence for dual pathways to expatriate retention. *Personnel Psychology*, 67(1), 203–239. <https://doi.org/10.1111/peps.12034>
- Rodriguez, J. K., & Ridgway, M. (2019). Contextualizing privilege and disadvantage: Lessons from women expatriates in the Middle East. *Organization*, 26(3), 391–409. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1350508418812580>
- Rutten, R. (2020). Applying and assessing large-N QCA: Causality and robustness from a critical realist perspective. *Sociological Methods & Research*, 51(3), 1211–1243. <https://doi.org/10.1177/00491241209149551350508418812580>
- Salamon, X., & Davoine, E. (2015). International adjustment of female vs male business expatriates: A replication study in Switzerland. *Journal of Global Mobility*, 3(2), 183–212. <https://doi.org/10.1108/JGM-12-2014-0055>
- Schneider, C. Q., & Wagemann, C. (2012). *Set-Theoretic Methods for the Social Sciences: A Guide to Qualitative Comparative Analysis*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Selmer, J. (2001). Expatriate selection: Back to basics? *International Journal of Human Resource Management*, 12(8), 1219–1233. <https://doi.org/10.1080/09585190110083767>
- Selmer, J. (2006). Language ability and adjustment: Western expatriates in China. *Thunderbird International Business Review*, 48(3), 347–368. <https://doi.org/10.1002/tie.20099>
- Selmer, J., & Laurant, J. (2011). Acquired demographics and reasons to relocate among self-initiated expatriates. *The International Journal of Human Resource Management*, 22(10), 2055–2070. <https://doi.org/10.1080/09585192.2011.580176>
- Selmer, J., & Leung, A. S. M. (2003). International adjustment of female vs. male business expatriates. *The International Journal of Human Resource Management*, 14(7), 1117–1131. <https://doi.org/10.1080/0958519032000114237>
- Shaffer, M. A., Harrison, D. A., Gregersen, H., Black, J. S., & Ferzandi, L. A. (2006). You can take it with you: Individual differences and expatriate effectiveness. *Journal of Applied Psychology*, 91(1), 109–125. <https://doi.org/10.1037/0021-9010.91.1.109>
- Shen, J., & Jiang, F. (2015). Factors influencing Chinese female expatriates' performance in international assignments. *The International Journal of Human Resource Management*, 26(3), 299–315. <https://doi.org/10.1080/09585192.2011.581637>
- Silbiger, A., Barnes, B. R., Berger, R., & Renwick, D. W. S. (2021). The role of regulatory focus and its influence on the cultural distance—Adjustment relationship for expatriate managers. *Journal of Business Research*, 122, 398–410. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jbusres.2020.09.021>
- Sinangil, H. K., & Ones, D. S. (2003). Gender differences in expatriate job performance. *Applied Psychology*, 52(3), 461–475. <https://doi.org/10.1111/1464-0597.00144>
- Sperber, S., & Linder, C. (2024). When the going gets tougher: international assignments, external shocks and the factor of gender. *European Journal of International Management*, 23(4), 537–567. <https://doi.org/10.1504/EJIM.2024.139797>
- Suutari, V., & Riisala, K. (2001). Leadership styles in Central Eastern Europe: Experiences of Finnish expatriates in the Czech Republic, Hungary and Poland. *Scandinavian Journal of Management*, 17(2), 249–280. [https://doi.org/10.1016/S0956-5221\(99\)00037-8](https://doi.org/10.1016/S0956-5221(99)00037-8)
- Suutari, V., Brewster, C., Mäkelä, L., Dickmann, M., & Tornikoski, C. (2018). The effect of international work experience on the career success of expatriates: A comparison of assigned and self-initiated expatriates. *Human Resource Management*, 57(1), 37–54. <https://doi.org/10.1002/hrm.21827>
- Szabo, S. 2019. Foreign direct investment in the Czech Republic: a visegrád comparison. https://ec.europa.eu/info/publications/foreign-direct-investment-czech-republic-visegrad-comparison_en
- Takeuchi, R., Li, Y., & Wang, M. (2019). Expatriates' performance profiles: Examining the effects of work experiences on the longitudinal change patterns. *Journal of Management*, 45(2), 451–475. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0149206317741195>

Dr Honglan Yu is a Lecturer in International Entrepreneurship within the Entrepreneurship, Strategy and International Business (ES&IB) group at the Sheffield University Management School. His research interests lie in antecedents, processes and outcomes of organisational learning during SMEs' internationalisation.

Dr Kwaku Adams is an Associate Professor in International Business & Management at the Bradford School of Management. He is a Senior Fellow of the Higher Education Academy. Dr Adams has also held academic positions in North America. First, as a Lecturer in Strategy and Global Management at the Haskayne School of Business, University of Calgary and a Visiting Lecturer of Management at the University of Lethbridge School of Management in Calgary, Canada. His work has appeared in quality outlets such as *Tourism Management*, *Journal of International Management*, *Journal of Business Research*, *Technovation*, *Technological Forecasting and Social Change*, *IEEE- Transactions on Engineering Management*, *Journal of Environmental Management*, *Critical Perspectives on International Business*, *Thunderbird International Business Review*, *Resources Policy*, *Employee Relations*, *Strategic Change*, amongst others. Dr Adams is currently an Associate Editor for *Business Strategy and Development* and the *Journal of Enterprising Communities*. He is also on the Editorial Review Boards of the *Thunderbird International Business Review* and the *Africa Journal of Management*.

Dr Ondřej Částecký is an Associate Professor at Masaryk University, Faculty of Economics and Administration. Ondřej got his Ph.D. in Business Administration in 2010, focusing on Stakeholder Management. His current research focuses on determinants of ethical consumption, mainly on the intention-behaviour gap in this area. Dr.Částecký is Fulbright Alumni.

Dr Lianghui Lei is an Associate Professor in the School of Finance and Economics at Guangdong Polytechnic Normal University, China. His research focuses on cross-cultural management, cultural intelligence, and the global mobility of migrants and expatriates. He has a particular interest in applying fuzzy-set Qualitative Comparative Analysis (fsQCA) to management and international business research. His work has appeared in leading journals such as the *Journal of Business Research* and *The International Journal of Human Resource Management*.