Cognitive and affective reasons to expatriate, career embeddedness and work outcomes of self-initiated expatriates

A quantitative study on career embeddedness, work performance and job satisfaction of self-initiated expatriates

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Abstract

Despite the fact that relocating and working abroad is becoming a widespread phenomenon, the research on self-initiated expatriation is still scare in comparison with the literature on organizational expatriates. However, it is not clear to what extent research findings regarding organizational expatriates are applicable to self-initiated expatriates. Four types of reasons to expatriate of self-initiated expatriates were examined: refugee, mercenary, explorer and architect and were divided into cognitive and affective reasons. In order to examine cognitive and affective reasons to expatriate and their effect on career embeddedness, work performance and job satisfaction, a questionnaire was distributed to self-initiated expatriates. Inherent demographic characteristics of self-initiated expatriates such as age and gender were investigated as well. Results indicated that one of the affective reasons to expatriate, explorer reasons, had a negative influence on career embeddedness while the cognitive reasons to expatriate, mercenary and architect reasons, had a positive effect on career embeddedness. Architect reasons were also found to have a positive effect on work performance while refugee reasons had a negative association with job satisfaction. Furthermore, results suggested that reasons to expatriate of self-initiated expatriates differ in terms of age and gender. Implications of the findings are discussed in further detail.

Keywords: self-initiated expatriates; reasons to expatriate; career embeddedness; work performance; job satisfaction; demographics;
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1. Introduction

1.1. Background

Expanding global competition and the boom of internationalization have increased the need for effective and qualified professionals. In order to sustain their competitive advantage, companies are improving the international aspects of their personnel management. The increase in globalization has led to an increase in the number of employees being sent on long-term international assignments as well as the international mobility of individuals.

Academic research on expatriate employees has mainly focused on company-backed expatriates who have been assigned by their parent company to a foreign location (e.g. Dickmann, Doherty, Mills, & Brewster, 2008; Edström & Galbraith, 1977; Stahl, Miller, & Tung, 2002). The individuals who are sent abroad by a company to undertake an international assignment have been given different labels such as company-backed expatriates, assigned expatriates as well as organizational expatriates (Peltokorpi & Froese, 2009).

However, individuals’ relocation abroad in order to find their own work is becoming a widespread phenomenon. This type of expatriates has been termed ‘international itinerants’ as well as ‘independent internationally mobile professionals’ (Banai & Harry, 2004; McKenna & Richardson, 2007). These individuals undertake international working and take charge of their career without the direct support of an organization (Inkson, Arthur, Pringle, & Barry, 1997; Suutari & Brewster, 2000; Lee 2005; Vance 2005). They have been labelled self-initiated expatriates given that they make the decision to relocate and work abroad themselves (Suutari & Brewster, 2000).

Few studies have researched the topic of self-initiated expatriates and their motivational factors, funding resources and career types (Inkson, et al., 1997; Jokinen, Brewster, & Suutari,
Several studies have compared organizational expatriates and self-initiated expatriates taking into account reasons for relocation, motivational factors as well as career anchors (Cerdin & Pargneux, 2010; Doherty, Dickmann, & Mills, 2008, 2011; Suutari & Brewster, 2000). However, the research on self-initiated expatriates is still scarce. Thus, more research is needed in order to understand better self-initiated expatriates and what drives their expatriation.

Several studies have addressed the reasons for expatriation among self-initiated expatriate academics (Richardson & Mallon, 2005; Richardson & McKenna 2002, 2003). Those studies discuss reasons for expatriation, work outcomes, inherent and acquired demographics of self-initiated expatriate academics (Selmer & Lauring, 2010, 2011a, 2012). Although those studies have important implications with regard to understanding self-initiated expatriates and how their reasons to relocate affect work outcomes, the results from those studies may be difficult to generalize for all types of self-initiated expatriates because the samples which were researched were drawn from expatriate academics in the science discipline (Selmer & Lauring, 2013a).

Therefore, given that self-initiated expatriation is becoming a common phenomenon and that the research on self-initiated expatriation is still scarce, it is essential to gain more insight into reasons for relocation of self-initiated expatriates. There are some studies which have researched self-initiated expatriates and their career anchors, career success, career experiences, and repatriation (Cao, Hirschi, & Deller, 2011; Cerdin & Pargneux, 2010; Doherty, 2013; Doherty, Richardson, & Thorn, 2013; Tharenou & Caulfield, 2010).

However, the research on reasons for self-initiated expatriation and their relation to work outcomes such as work performance and job satisfaction has been mainly focused on self-initiated expatriate academics. Furthermore, there has been little research on what ties self-initiated expatriates to their career (Tharenou & Caulfield, 2010). Thus, not enough is known
about the extent to which self-initiated expatriates are embedded in their career and whether their career embeddedness is influenced by their reasons to expatriate. Moreover, previous studies on whether reasons to expatriate of self-initiated expatriates can be differentiated by inherent demographics such as age and gender have also focused on self-initiated expatriate academics (Selmer & Lauring, 2010).

1.2. Research questions

Although more professionals initiate their own expatriation than are assigned abroad by their parent company, not enough is known about the under-researched group of self-initiated expatriates (Doherty et al., 2011; Myers & Pringle, 2005). In addition, little is known about the reasons behind the decision to live and work abroad as well as how these reasons are related to career embeddedness, work performance and job satisfaction of self-initiated expatriates. In addition, little is known about whether there are differences in reasons to expatriate of SIEs and work outcomes in terms of age and gender. Previous research has shown that there were no differences of age and gender with regards to work outcomes (Selmer & Lauring, 2013b) but there were differences with regards to reasons to expatriate (Selmer & Lauring, 2010). Therefore, more research is called for in order to understand issues related to self-initiated expatriation.

Thus, taking into consideration the above-mentioned, the following research questions will be investigated:

How do reasons to expatriate influence career embeddedness, work performance and job satisfaction of self-initiated expatriates?

Do reasons to expatriate of self-initiated expatriates differ in terms of age and gender?
Answering the questions will involve assessing the reasons to expatriate among self-initiated expatriates and whether those reasons are differentiated by age and gender, the extent to which self-initiated expatriates are career embedded and whether the motivational factors for living and working abroad have an impact on career embeddedness, work performance and job satisfaction.

1.3. Purpose

The purpose of this thesis is to investigate whether reasons to expatriate of self-initiated expatriates have an impact on their career embeddedness, work performance and job satisfaction. In addition, it will be investigated whether reasons to expatriate of self-initiated expatriates differ in terms of age and gender. This is an important investigation for several reasons.

First, the research will shed more light on the types of reasons which motivate self-initiated expatriates to live and work abroad and will thus make a contribution to the limited literature on self-initiated expatriation. Second, the thesis will contribute to international human resource management literature by investigating the concept of career embeddedness in the case of self-initiated expatriates.

The research will focus on self-initiated expatriates’ career embeddedness and how it is influenced by reasons to expatriate which has not been researched yet as far as is known. Thus, an important gap in current research about reasons to expatriate and career embeddedness will be filled. Furthermore, the effects of reasons to relocate on work performance and job satisfaction as well as whether reasons to expatriate are differentiated by age and gender will be investigated.

Finally, the results of this thesis will be relevant to human resource managers willing to recruit self-initiated expatriates. Thus, companies will gain more insight into what motivates self-
initiated expatriation and how those motivational factors affect the career embeddedness, work performance and job satisfaction of potential employees.

1.4. Delimitation

There are several boundaries in this thesis which were set before any investigations were carried out. First, for the purpose of this research only self-initiated expatriates will be discussed. Therefore, organizational expatriates will not be discussed and there will be no comparisons between organizational expatriates and self-initiated expatriates due to the fact that comparisons between the two groups have already been given some research attention (Biemann & Andresen, 2010; Doherty et al., 2011; Jokinen et al., 2008; Peltokorpi & Froese, 2009). Therefore, literature which discusses solely organizational expatriates will not be reviewed in this thesis.

In addition, sojourners and immigrants will not be addressed as well. In some cases the reason for relocation can be spouse’s self-initiated expatriation. However, this topic will not be covered in this thesis and spouses of self-initiated expatriates will not be addressed.

In order to investigate career embeddedness, work performance and job satisfaction of self-initiated expatriates the population target of this study will be self-initiated expatriates who are currently working. Thus, unemployed self-initiated expatriates will not be considered in this thesis. Moreover, topics such as underemployment among self-initiated expatriates, cross-cultural adjustment as well as job adjustment will not be discussed as those have been addressed by previous studies (Froese & Peltokorpi, 2013; Lee 2005).

As far as the methodological procedures such as data collection are concerned no observational studies or interviews will be conducted. The data will be collected with the use of a questionnaire. The questionnaire will be administered electronically. Thus, questionnaire
administration modes such as face-to-face administration, paper-and-pencil administration as well as administration by post or telephone will not be used due to the fact that those modes are very time-consuming (Czaja & Blair, 2005).

In order to analyze the data the statistical software package IBM SPSS Statistics will be used. Other statistical packages will not be used because SPSS is considered sufficient to analyze the collected data in order to address the research questions.

1.5. Abbreviations

The following abbreviations will be used throughout the thesis:

- SIE – self-initiated expatriate
- SIEs – self-initiated expatriates

2. Literature review

2.1. Conceptualization

2.1.1. Self-initiated expatriates

The issue of SIEs was addressed for the first time in an article by Inkson et al. (1997). There has been a growing number of studies comparing SIEs and organizational expatriates, exploring the motives of SIEs and discussing SIEs and their career success (Banai & Harry, 2004; Doherty et al., 2011; Suutari & Brewster, 2000). Based on those studies it can be argued that SIEs are individuals who take the initiative to go abroad and find work on their own without being sent by a parent organization from their home country (Cerdin & Pargneux, 2010; Selmer & Lauring, 2012). Therefore, SIEs are employed abroad and have acquired their job of their own accord.
In addition, the funding for SIEs’ relocation and for the time spent abroad comes from their personal savings and casual earnings (Inkson et al., 1997). The goal of the experience abroad is related to individual development while the SIEs’ career type can be defined as a boundaryless career. The boundaryless career is identified by a career identity which is not dependent on the employer and allows for accumulation of employment-flexible know-how (Arthur & Rousseau, 1996; Inkson et al., 1997). SIE’s career type has also been described as a self-managed international career (Myers & Pringle, 2005).

Hence, SIEs are not short-term travellers because they live and are employed abroad. Therefore, SIEs are neither sojourners nor immigrants (Richardson & Zikic, 2007). SIEs might first be short-term travellers and turn into expatriates later on or SIEs might turn from expatriates into immigrants at a later stage (Al Ariss & Özbilgin, 2010). Moreover, SIEs might go abroad without a definite time-frame in mind (Tharenou, 2010). Thus, the perception of being a SIE is a self-qualification at a certain point in time.

2.1.2. Reasons to expatriate

Reasons for self-initiated expatriation were first addressed in a small scale qualitative study of 30 British academic expatriates (Richardson & McKenna, 2002). Four different categories were proposed based on the motives for self-initiated expatriation among academics, namely the refugee, the mercenary, the explorer and the architect. These categories were further investigated in large scale studies (Selmer & Lauring, 2012, 2013a). These four categories which depict different reasons to expatriate can be organized as push or pull factors (Selmer & Lauring, 2013a). In addition, self-initiated expatriation is a continuous process and a person can belong to more than one category (Selmer & Lauring, 2013a).
The refugee SIE type is mainly motivated by a desire for life changes. Therefore, such SIEs undertake a career abroad in order to escape the home context (Richardson & McKenna, 2002). Thus, SIEs see expatriation as an escape from negative working situations and they look for opportunities for change abroad. In addition, SIEs who are motivated by a desire for life changes are often bored with their home country (Selmer & Lauring, 2012).

SIEs whose decision to seek employment abroad is influenced by financial incentives are the so called mercenary type (Richardson & McKenna, 2002). This particular type of SIE expatriate because they believe that working abroad will provide them with the opportunity to make and save a large amount of money. In the case of SIE academics, financial incentives are a subsidiary theme because academics are not generally motivated by money (Richardson & McKenna, 2002). However, business expatriates perceive money as one of the primary driver of expatriation (Tung, 1998). Thus, financial incentives will play an important role in this research given that the target population consists of SIEs both in the private sector and the public sector.

The explorer type is mainly motivated by a desire for travelling and adventure (Richardson & McKenna, 2002). This type of SIEs is very eager to travel and is driven by a wish to see more of the world and a search of new experiences as well as desire for adventure and challenges.

Another category which was identified in Richardson and McKenna’s (2002) study was the architect SIE. Architect SIEs expatriate because they see expatriation as a career building experience. This type of SIE is motivated by career enhancing prospects and an intention to do the right thing for being promoted (Selmer & Lauring, 2012). In addition, such SIEs believe that expatriation and work experience abroad are beneficial to their career.
2.1.3. Career embeddedness, work performance and job satisfaction

2.1.3.1. Career embeddedness

The concept of career embeddedness is based on the notion of job embeddedness (Feldman, 2007). Feldman (2007) suggests that people do not just get embedded in their jobs but they get embedded in their career as well.

Feldman (2007) takes a multilevel approach to career embeddedness by discussing factors at an individual, job and occupational level. Those factors influence whether people remain with or change their career paths (Wang, Olsen, & Shultz, 2012). Hence, career embeddedness is a multidimensional construct which is composed of a collection of variables which tend to tie individuals to their career. These variables are described among three subdimensions, namely links, fit and sacrifices (Feldman, 2007). These three subdimensions arise from individuals’ work and community. Thus, the construct of career embeddedness can provide better understanding of the factors which anchor individuals in their career by looking at variables depicting individuals’ involvement, personal investment and maintenance of important relationships (Feldman, 2007).

The links subdimension refers to connections which workers have with other people and institutions. Thus, working closely with a wide variety of colleagues, clients, customers, and suppliers can tie people more to their career through social networks and job activities (Feldman, 2007). Furthermore, the amount of task interdependence is likely to increase career embeddedness. This is due to the fact that high task interdependence may create the feeling among workers that others depend on them which then leads to attachment to the career and higher career embeddedness (Feldman, 2007).
Fit is another subdimension of career embeddedness. Fit can be conceptualized in many different ways but in the general sense it represents the compatibility between an individual’s knowledge and skills, work context and specific position’s requirements (Adams, Webster, & Buyarski, 2010). Thus, if there is not a good fit between worker’s skills and job demands as well as worker’s personal style and the personal style of workgroup members, the worker’s career embeddedness will be low.

The third subdimension, namely sacrifice, represents the loss of tangible and psychological investments if individuals decide to change their career path (Adams et al., 2010). Examples of such investments are career status, prestige, pay, benefits as well as education and training (Feldman, 2007). In addition, other factors which might tie individuals to their career are opportunities for promotion and advancement (Mitchell, Holtom, Lee, Sablynski, & Erez, 2001). Furthermore, career change can lead to considerable stress not only for the individuals who decide to change their career path but also for the people around them. Thus, spouses, partners, family members and children may bear some of the costs associated with career change (Feldman, 2007).

Thus, building on the research of job embeddedness (Mitchell et al., 2001), it is suggested that workers’ career embeddedness is a function of the links and fit with their current career path, as well as the sacrifices which would be associated with leaving their career (Feldman, 2007). Applied to SIEs, this theory suggests that expatriates will be strongly tied to their career when they have valuable career links, when there is a fit between their career goals and the host country opportunities and when they will have to make substantial career sacrifices if they decided to change their career path (Tharenou & Caulfield, 2010).
Therefore, the career and employment opportunities, the money SIEs can earn in the host country as well as the career benefits and business opportunities SIEs have in the host country will have to be forfeited if they decided to take another career path. SIEs’ fit is represented by the fit between career needs and opportunities in the host country, a fit between the SIE’s professional growth and what is happening in the host country, and the needs for international experience (Tharenou & Caulfield, 2010). Career links in the case of SIEs refer to the network of career contacts, career-enhancing activities and friends with similar career paths (Adams et al., 2010).

2.1.3.2. Work performance

Work performance is often referred to as the core technical duties of a job (Fischer, 2003). It is also known as task performance or in-role performance. Previous studies have found several antecedents of work performance including job satisfaction, job attitudes, personality, motivation, leadership, group process and organization design. It has been assumed that work performance is a function of one’s ability and motivation. However, such a function is unable to account for other variables which are not under the control of the individual (Blumberg & Pringle, 1982). Another approach to work performance is influenced by one’s capacity to perform, willingness to perform and opportunity to perform.

Work performance can also be represented by one’s ability to get along with others, the ability to finish required assignments on time and the quality of the performance (Earley, 1987).

2.1.3.3. Job satisfaction

There are many different conceptualizations of job satisfaction. A consensus definition of job satisfaction is “an affective reaction to one’s job, resulting from the incumbent’s comparison of actual outcomes with those that are desired” (Cranny, Smith, & Stone, 1992, p.1). This
definition is equivalent to a definition by Locke (1969) saying that job satisfaction is as an emotional state which results from the evaluation of one’s job or job experiences.

Another way of looking at job satisfaction is as an attitude (Brief & Roberson, 1989). Defined as an attitude, job satisfaction is a positive or negative evaluation which one makes about one’s job or job situation (Weiss, 2002). Attitude is a complex entity which includes affective responses, beliefs about an object and behaviours in relation to an object (Weiss, 2002). Thus, attitude is a multidimensional construct which includes affective and cognitive components (Brief & Roberson, 1989). However, attitude and affective responses are treated as synonymous (Locke, 1976; Vroom, 1964). Expectancy theorists stipulate that satisfaction follows from rewards produced by performance (Naylor, Pritchard, & Ilgen, 1980; Vroom 1964).

Given the difficulty of defining job satisfaction, some researchers stick to the operations (Weiss, 2002). Thus, job satisfaction is defined by the way it is measured, for instance by giving an evaluation of attitude measures along a scale (Weiss, 2002). As an overall assessment, job satisfaction is primarily work-related (Selmer & Lauring, 2012). Job satisfaction may arise from successful adaptation to requirements of the job in the host country (Shaffer & Harrison, 1998). It can also be the result of individual’s integration in the new workplace or a result of perceiving the work group the individual identifies with as being successful (Kalleberg, 1977).

2.1.4. Age and gender

Age and gender are inherent demographic characteristics (Quazi, 2003). There are different approaches to conceptualizing age because aging refers to different changes which occur in biological, psychological and societal functioning over time (Kooij, de Lange, Jansen, & Dikkers, 2008). Most studies use chronological age which refers to one’s calendar age. Another conceptualization of age is as functional or performance-based age which is based on worker’s
performance and recognizes the variation in individual’s abilities and functioning through different ages. Age can be also conceptualized in terms of one’s social perception of age and it is therefore called psychological or subjective age. Organizational age refers to the aging of workers in jobs and organizations. The life span concept of age uses some characteristics of the above-mentioned conceptualizations of age but advances the possibility for behavioural change at any point in the life cycle (Kooij et al., 2008). In this thesis the chronological conceptualization of age will be used.

Gender can also be conceptualized in different ways depending on the approach which is used. Gender can be defined in terms of personalities, traits and emotions, in terms of social interaction, and in terms of structures and practices in social organizations. Thus, gender can be defined as a system of social practices which creates and maintains distinctions and organizes relations of inequality on the basis of these distinctions (Wharton, 2005). Gender also refers to the differences of psychological, physical, mental and behavioural characteristics and differences in gender are generally related to gender roles (Gove, 1994; Wharton, 2005).

2.2. Theory

There are many different definitions of motivation (Kleinginna & Kleinginna, 1981). Some definitions address the phenomenological or psychological aspects of motivation. The phenomenological definitions emphasize factors such as need, desire and affect while the psychological definitions emphasize internal physical processes such as some specific physical needs (Kleinginna & Kleinginna, 1981). Thus, motivation can be seen as a drive to satisfy physiological and psychological human needs (Cofer, 1972).

Other definitions of motivation emphasize motivation’s energizing and directional aspects (Kleinginna & Kleinginna, 1981). Hence, motivation is viewed as an inner state which
energizes and directs human decisions (Moutinho, 1987). Some definitions also try to account for the engaging in one individual’s activity as opposed to another as well as aspects such as goal-oriented behaviour, attraction by incentives and adaptive consequences (Thompson, 1975).

Therefore, SIEs might be motivated to make the choice of living and working abroad in order to fulfil future objectives or because they see working abroad as an objective itself (Selmer & Lauring, 2013a). This is due to the fact that sometimes people act in a particular way in order to reach an outcome and other times because of enjoyment of the activity itself (Kobbeltvedt & Wolff, 2009).

Research on psychological decision making has mainly focused on cognitive processing. However, the literature suggesting that affective processes may also play a role is growing (Bagozzi, Gopinath, & Nyer, 1999; Hirschman & Holbrook, 1982; Oliver, Rust, & Varki, 1997). The difference between decisions driven by cognition vs. affect presents a dichotomy between action as a goal and action as a means towards a goal (Kobbeltvedt & Wolff, 2009). Thus, motivation varies not only in terms of level, but also in terms of orientation (Ryan & Deci, 2000). In addition, the dichotomy is also referred to as extrinsic vs. intrinsic motivation and hedonic vs. utilitarian behaviour (Ryan & Deci, 2000; Scarpi 2005).

Intrinsic motivation refers to doing something because an individual finds it interesting or enjoyable. Thus, an intrinsically motivated individual is moved to act for the fun or challenge entailed rather than because of external pressures or awards. Therefore, people who make spontaneous and affective-driven decisions do so because of some positive experiences associated with the action (Ryan & Deci, 2000).
Extrinsic motivation, however, refers to doing something because it leads to a separable outcome (Ryan & Deci, 2000). This type of motivation arises from outside the individual and refers to the behaviour that is driven by external rewards such as money, grades, and praise.

Previous research has shown that there is often a conflict between the behaviour based on affective-decision making and its consequences (Kobbeltvedt & Wolff, 2009). The conflict stems from the fact that affective qualities can be seen as a particular kind of behavioural consequence and the experiential part of such a pleasure or displeasure is in the present whereas other behavioural outputs lie in the future. Therefore, the difference in time perspective associated with ongoing activities and their consequences is the reason for the tension between cognitive- or affective-driven behaviour (Kobbeltvedt & Wolff, 2009).

In addition, affective decisions are usually spontaneous and are taken more quickly than intentional, well-thought-out decisions (Pham, 2007; Strack, Werth, & Deutsch, 2006). Affective decisions are pleasure-pain oriented and occur rapidly and automatically (Slovic, Finucane, Peters & MacGregor, 2002). Therefore, decisions based upon affection are riskier, less rational and less thought-trough in comparison with decisions based on cognitive reasoning (Slovic & Peters, 2006).

Furthermore, research has shown that affective decisions tend to be more extreme than cognitive decisions (Slovic et al., 2002; Ratner & Herbst, 2005). Affective reasons enable people to make decisions and judgments but sometimes some decisions which are perceived as good might not turn out the way it was anticipated and might have bad outcomes. Such unanticipated outcomes can lead to frustration and stress (Ratner & Herbst, 2005).
Therefore, SIEs whose decision to live and work abroad is based on cognitive reasons may be better psychologically prepared to cope with stress, frustration and shocks than SIEs whose decision to expatriate is based on affective responses (Selmer & Lauring, 2013a).

The previously presented four types of SIEs can be categorized according to the cognitive- and affective-driven decisions’ dichotomy. Cognitive-driven decisions to expatriate implying actions as a means towards a goal will be referred to as cognitive reasons to expatriate while affective-driven decisions involving action as a goal in itself will be referred to as affective reasons to expatriate.

2.3. Hypotheses

2.3.1. Affective reasons to expatriate

2.3.1.1. Refugee reasons

SIEs’ decision based on refugee reasons is clearly driven by affective responses. This is due to the fact that SIEs who expatriate for refugee reasons see expatriation as a goal in itself. Expatriation is seen as an escape from the current situation and a change from boredom with the current lifestyle. SIEs expatriating for refugee reasons will have positive associations with the host country and might expect that their expatriation will yield more pleasant feelings than the ones experienced in their home country.

However, relocating and working abroad can be very stressful (Bhaskar-Shrinivas, Harrison, Shaffer, & Luk, 2005; Brown, 2008). That is also the reason why there are many expatriates who fail to complete their assignments abroad and decide to return to their home countries early (Black & Gregersen, 1991; Hechanova, Beehr, & Christiansen, 2003; Tung, 1988).
SIEs who expatriate for refugee reasons might be preoccupied with the intention to change their lives and lose their focus at work (Selmer & Lauring, 2012). Moreover, affect-oriented stress-coping, associated with refugee reasons to expatriate, has been shown to be less effective than cognitive-stress coping (Herman & Tetrick, 2009).

Refugee reasons to expatriate have been found to have very negative associations with work outcomes such as work performance, work effectiveness and job satisfaction (Selmer & Lauring, 2012). SIEs, who expatriate for refugee reasons, relocate with the intention to experience something new. Moreover, career change entails some risk and individuals who are open to new experiences are more likely to perceive alternative career paths (Feldman, 2007). In addition, another factor which might induce career change is boredom. Therefore, SIEs expatriating for refugee reasons might be more inclined to change their career. Therefore, the following hypotheses are suggested:

\[ H1a: \text{Refugee reasons are negatively related to career embeddedness.} \]

\[ H1b: \text{Refugee reasons are negatively related to work performance.} \]

\[ H1c: \text{Refugee reasons are negatively related to job satisfaction.} \]

2.3.1.2 Explorer reasons

Exploring the world may be described as ‘an action as a goal in itself’ which is expected to be pleasurable and enjoyable and to yield new positive experiences. Therefore, explorer reasons could be considered to be affect-driven. Thus, the decision to expatriate is taken more quickly and is not an analytical and well-thought-out decision. Expatriates relocating for explorer reasons might want to visit other countries in order to explore different cultures and to communicate with different people.
The explorer SIEs choose the destination to which they expatriate. Thus, SIEs have a good chance of experiencing high job satisfaction given the relative control of choosing the host country (Selmer & Lauring, 2012).

SIEs can choose a country which satisfies their desire for travelling but that does not necessarily mean that the SIEs are not career embedded. Even though the decision to expatriate for explorer reasons is considered affect-driven that does not rule out the option of satisfying one’s desire for exploring new cultures and following one’s career path at the same time. This is the case for SIEs whose desire for travelling and adventure fits around their career (Inkson & Myers, 2003). In addition, it is difficult to predict work performance of SIEs who expatriate for explorer reasons because their decision is affect-driven and the work situation is subject to variations in contextual factors (Selmer & Lauring, 2012). Accordingly, the following hypothesis is offered:

\[ H2. \text{Explorer reasons are negatively related to job satisfaction.} \]

2.3.2. Cognitive reasons to expatriate

2.3.2.1. Mercenary reasons

The mercenary SIE type is motivated by financial incentives which are a type of reward and ‘a means towards a goal’. Therefore, expatriation based on mercenary reasons can be considered a cognitive-driven decision. Expatriates willing to work abroad in order to earn and save money are willing to tolerate discomfort as long as they find the financial incentives in the host country satisfying (Richardson & McKenna, 2002).

SIEs, who are driven by financial incentives, are expected to select host countries which offer higher remuneration than the one in their home country. Thus, they may feel motivated to perform well at work and may be satisfied with their job as long as they find the reward system
satisfying. Even though financial incentives such as money are not the most important motivator, monetary incentives can motivate individuals to the extent that they lead to the setting of a specific high goal and the commitment to it (Latham & Ernst, 2006; Locke, 1968). Therefore, monetary incentives influence individuals’ desire to advance in their career and can lead to higher career stability. Hence, the following hypotheses are presented:

\[ H3a. \text{Mercenary reasons are positively related to career embeddedness.}\]

\[ H3b. \text{Mercenary reasons are positively related to work performance.}\]

\[ H3c. \text{Mercenary reasons are positively related to job satisfaction.}\]

2.3.2.2. Architect reasons

Expatriating for architect reasons is clearly a cognitive-driven decision because SIEs relocate in order to enhance their career which can be considered as ‘a means towards a goal’. Therefore, the decision to expatriate for career-related reasons involves evaluation of different alternatives and careful consideration.

SIEs who expatriate for career reasons will choose destinations where they can enhance their career prospects and do the right thing for being promoted. Thus, such SIEs are expected to be tied well to their career and to be willing to spend considerable efforts to perform well at work. However, it may be difficult to predict the level of job satisfaction because although SIEs might be very hard-working, other factors which are not under their control might influence their job satisfaction. Accordingly, the following hypotheses are offered:

\[ H4a. \text{Architect reasons are positively related to career embeddedness.}\]

\[ H4b. \text{Architect reasons are positively related to work performance.}\]
2.3.3 Age and gender

2.3.3.1 Age

Age group differences stem from the fact that individuals go through biological, psychological and social functioning changes with the process of aging. As a result, even individuals sharing the same chronological age might differ in terms of health, career stage, family status, cognitive abilities and performance (Kooij et al., 2008).

Previous research has shown that age is related to work performance and work motivation (Rhodes, 1983; Waldman & Avolio, 1986). In addition, age often moderates the relationship between work characteristics and the intention to engage in different types of work activities (Kooij et al., 2008). Previous studies have found that when individuals get older, they consider high job demands, job variety and feedback less important while job security and physical security are considered to be of greater importance (Warr, 1997). Furthermore, when age increases workers are more motivated to perform jobs that offer more positive events but are less motivated to take on new tasks, particularly tasks involving exposure to new technology (Feldman, 2007; Kanfer & Ackerman, 2004).

Furthermore, older people tend to be less concerned with financial gain than younger people because older people have already established their financial security (Greller & Simpson, 1999). Older people also tend to be more risk averse and to find satisfaction in comfortable work situations while younger people are more prone to take risks (Kanfer & Ackerman, 2004).

A study on SIEs academics has shown that reasons to expatriate are differentiated in terms of age (Selmer & Lauring, 2010). Based on the above-mentioned assumptions, the following hypothesis is suggested:
H5. SIEs’ reasons to expatriate differ in terms of age.

2.3.3.2. Gender

Gender differences often arise because of differences in biological characteristics and in gender roles in the social structure (Wharton, 2005). There are differences in gender in terms of family roles, work roles, interaction and institutions.

Literature on gender roles presents men as more assertive, instrumental and competitive while women are presented as more emotional, sensitive and affiliative (Gove, 1994). Men are known to be motivated by extrinsic motivation while women are known to be more intrinsically motivated (Bhagat & Williams, 2008).

Thus, the motivation for expatriation might be differentiated by gender. Given that in some countries gender-based discriminatory structures still exist, women might be willing to expatriate in order to have an equal chance of getting a job. Thus, women from countries which score high on masculinity might be willing to expatriate to countries low on masculinity in order to gain career promotions (Selmer & Lauring, 2010).

Research has shown that while men find pay of great importance, women value job security and interaction with people more (Elizur, 2001). In addition, women are more concerned with safety and security while travelling (Carr, 2001). Based on the above-mentioned assumptions, the following hypothesis is offered:

H6. SIEs’ reasons to expatriate differ in terms of gender.
3. Methodology

3.1. Research paradigm, research method and research design

The term paradigm was introduced by Thomas Kuhn but it had many different definitions (Guba, 1990). A research paradigm is a set of beliefs, values, assumptions and practices that a community of researchers shares regarding the nature and conduct of research (Johnson & Christensen, 2004). Research paradigms are described by their distinctive ontology, epistemology and methodology (Guba, 1990). Ontology refers to the nature of the ‘knowable’ and the nature of ‘reality’. Epistemology addresses the nature of the relationship between the inquirer and the known or knowable. Methodology refers to the way the inquirer should go about finding out knowledge and more specifically the methods which should be used in the research (Guba, 1990).

In order to address the research questions, quantitative research method will be used. Quantitative research usually follows the positivism or postpositivism paradigm. In this thesis the postpositivism paradigm will be adopted. Ontologically, postpositivism adheres to the critical realism approach where the reality is assumed to exist but only imperfectly and probabilistically (Guba 1990; Guba & Lincoln, 1994). Although the researcher tries to adopt a distant and noninteractive position and to exclude biases and confounding factors from influencing the outcome, reality can only be apprehended as closely as possible but never perfectly.

Epistemologically, postpositivism follows the modified dualist/objectivist belief (Guba, 1990). Objectivity is seen as a ‘regulatory ideal’ which should rely on ‘critical traditions’ and ‘critical community’ by being consistent with the existent literature and by subjecting every inquiry to the judgment of editors, referees and professional peers respectively (Guba & Lincoln,
Methodologically, postpositivism places an emphasis on critical multiplism and the use of modified experimental methods meaning that the research should be based on as many sources of data, theories, and methods as possible (Guba, 1990).

Quantitative research typically follows the deductive or confirmatory scientific method because it builds on theory and focuses on hypotheses testing and theory testing (Johnson & Christensen, 2004). In addition, most common research objectives of quantitative research are quantitative description, causal explanation and prediction. Quantitative research identifies statistical relationships between variables while controlling for certain conditions and isolating the causal effect of single variables.

Furthermore, the results of quantitative research are statistical and generalizable in contrast with the results of qualitative research. The reason why the findings can be generalized stems from the fact that there is bigger social distance between the researcher and the subjects. Quantitative research involves surveys, testing and structured content analysis (Johnson & Christensen, 2004). Therefore, quantitative research method is suitable for investigating the relationships between reasons to expatriate and career embeddedness, work performance, and job satisfaction of SIEs.

Moreover, the thesis follows a cross-sectional research design because it relies on existing variations in the independent variables. In addition, the data is collected at one point in time. One of the advantages of cross-sectional design is that it enables the researcher to collect the data relatively quickly. Furthermore, cross-sectional designs are cost effective in comparison with experimental and longitudinal designs (de Vaus, 2001).
3.2. Target population

This thesis targeted SIEs both working in the private and the public sector. In addition, both men and women at the age of 21 to 65 were investigated. Individuals at the age of 21 are old enough to have finished a bachelor degree while the common age for retirement is 65.

SIEs are individuals who themselves make the decision to relocate and work abroad (Peltokorpi & Froese, 2009). SIEs take charge of their career abroad and find work of their own accord without being assigned to a foreign destination by a parent company from their home country (Cerdin & Pargneux, 2010). Therefore, SIEs choose the destination to which they relocate on their own. SIEs working in both the private and the public sector were judged as a suitable population to target since this way the results can be more generalizable.

3.3. Sampling

The growing popularity of online social networking sites such as Facebook and LinkedIn makes them suitable for constructing a snowball sampling frame (Bhutta, 2012). Facebook is suitable for snowball sampling because of its features, continuing growth and size of 1.15 billion users (Facebook, 2013). LinkedIn is an online professional network whose members share their professional experience on their profiles and follow organizations’ groups. LinkedIn has 238 million members (LinkedIn, 2013).

As a sampling frame Facebook has several advantages. Interaction on Facebook occurs through private messages and public postings. Thus, a researcher can reach the respondents in a fast and easy way. In addition, due to some Facebook features, other users might acquire the information from the public postings in their aggregated content posted by other users.
Furthermore, some users might share information which will appear in the aggregated content posted by other users. Thus, more users will be exposed to the same information (Bhutta, 2012).

The researcher’s Facebook and LinkedIn contacts were examined and a list of individuals, who stated on their profiles that they were working and living in a country different than the one of their nationality, was created. The list comprised of 134 subjects also called ‘seeds’ in the respond-driven sampling literature (Heckathorn, 1997).

3.4. Questionnaire design

When designing the questionnaire simple and familiar words were used and technical terms were avoided. Moreover, words with ambiguous meanings were avoided in order to make sure that all respondents will interpret the questions the same way. Questions on the same topic were grouped together. Furthermore, the background questions were placed at the end of the questionnaire because questions regarding the respondents’ age, gender, relationship status and education might be considered as a sensitive topic by some respondents. The questionnaire was kept as short as possible in order to increase the response rate. A short introduction describing the purpose of the study was included (Czaja & Blair, 2005).

When drafting a questionnaire, it is essential to review past studies with the same or similar problems and it is encouraged to use the same wording unless the questions are copyrighted (Czaja & Blair, 2005). After reviewing the literature on reasons to expatriate and work outcomes such as work performance and job satisfaction, the first set of questions were drafted. Those questions were regarding reasons to expatriate and were constructed after a similar previous study by Selmer and Lauring (2012). A mix of adapted and adopted scaled set of items was used. Thus, some of the questions were replicated and some of the questions’
wording was slightly changed while still keeping the same meaning. For instance, the item ‘I want to escape from my current situation’ was replicated, while the item ‘I want something new’ was changed to ‘I want to experience something new’. The final questionnaire can be seen in Appendix I.

The next set of questions was regarding career embeddedness, work performance and job satisfaction. The scales regarding career sacrifices and career fit were adapted after a study by Tharenou and Caulfield (2010). The scale addressing career links was developed after Adams et al. (2010). The scale measuring work performance was adapted after Earley (1987) and the scale measuring job satisfaction was adapted after West, Nicholson, and Rees (1987).

The last set of questions consisted of the background questions which asked about the subjects’ age, gender, language skills, relationship status, level of education and current position. Once the questionnaire draft was finished, it was pretested informally by sending it to several SIEs and asking them for feedback. Thus, the wording of some questions was changed according to the feedback which was provided (Czaja & Blair, 2005). The questionnaire was then developed online with the use of a commercial web survey software package. In order to pretest the questionnaire formally, a link to it was generated and was sent to a group of 20 SIEs. After the questionnaire was filled out by all the respondents, some simple statistical analyses were executed in order to test the data collection procedure.

3.5. Data collection

The data was collected electronically and a commercial web survey software package was used to administer the questionnaire. A hyperlink was created and was sent via private Facebook and LinkedIn messages to every subject on the initial ‘seed’ list. In the message the
subjects were asked to fill out the questionnaire if they were currently working and living in a country different than the one of their nationality. In addition, the subjects were asked to send the questionnaire to their friends and colleagues who also qualified as SIEs. Some of the subjects shared the hyperlink to the questionnaire as a public posting and more people were exposed to it.

In order to increase the response rate, a message containing the questionnaire hyperlink was posted on Facebook groups for expatriates and on forums such as Internations and britishexpats.com. All potential respondents were assured of anonymity and confidentiality.

Screening questions were used to make sure that the respondents qualified as SIEs. The first screening question asked whether the respondent was currently working in a country different than the respondent’s nationality. The second screening question asked whether the respondent had relocated and had acquired his employment abroad of his own accord. Thus, it was made sure that the respondent was indeed an expatriate who initiated the relocation.

A total of 171 responses were received of which 132 passed the screening questions indicating that the respondents belonged to the target group. Hence, 77.2 % of the respondents passed the screening questions.

3.6. Sample

The average age of the SIEs was 29.11 years (SD=7.78). As displayed in Table I, 48.5 % of the respondents were male and 51.5 % were female. They had spent on average 1.62 years working for their current employer. The majority of the SIEs were working in Germany (28 %), Malta (18.9 %) and Denmark (12.9 %). The other countries to which the SIEs expatriated and the descriptive statistics can be seen in Appendix II. The respondents included expatriates from 31
countries of which 21 were in Europe (Appendix II). Most of the respondents were not married (87.9 %), occupied positions at entry level (65.9 %) and their highest completed level of education was a Master’s degree or equivalent (57.6 %).

Table I. Background of the sample (N=132).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Background variables</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Gender</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>64</td>
<td>48.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>68</td>
<td>51.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Marital status</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Married</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>12.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not married</td>
<td>116</td>
<td>87.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Position</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Entry level</td>
<td>87</td>
<td>65.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Management</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>18.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Upper Management</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>6.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Executive (CEO/ Managing Director)</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Self-employed</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>6.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Education</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Elementary (up to high school)</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Secondary (high school or professional school)</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>8.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bachelor’s degree or equivalent</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>30.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Master’s degree or equivalent</td>
<td>76</td>
<td>57.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Doctorate</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Furthermore, for the purpose of this study SIEs were divided into younger and older SIEs by a median split. The average age of the younger SIEs was 24.7 (SD = 1.18) and on average they had worked for their current employer for 12.83 months (SD = 12.56). As displayed in Table II, most of the younger SIEs were not married (98.6 %), occupied positions at entry level (75.4 %) and their highest completed level of education was a Master’s degree of equivalent (53.6 %). The older SIEs had an average age of 33.94 (SD = 9.00) and they had worked for their
current employer, on average, for 26.62 months (SD = 33.22). Most of the older SIEs were not married (76.2 %), occupied positions at entry level (55.6 %) and their highest completed level of education was a Master’s degree of equivalent (61.9 %).

The total sample of SIEs was then divided into two groups based on gender. Male SIEs had an average age of 28.66 (SD = 6.64) and had worked, on average, for 22.13 months (SD = 31.02) for their current employer. As displayed in Table II, most of the male respondents were not married (84.4 %), occupied positions at entry level (65.6 %) and their highest completed level of education was a Master’s degree of equivalent (54.7 %). Female respondents had an average age of 29.53 (SD = 8.75) and they had worked for their current employer, on average, for 16.85 months (SD = 18.87). Most of the female SIEs were not married (91.2 %), occupied positions at entry level (66.2 %) and their highest completed level of education was a Master’s degree of equivalent (60.3 %).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table II. Background of the sub-samples (n=132)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Background variables</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Gender</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Marital status</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Married</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not married</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Position</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Entry level</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Management</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Upper Management</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Executive (CEO)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Managing Director</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Self-employed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Education</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Elementary (up to high school)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Secondary (high school or professional school)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bachelor’s degree or equivalent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Master’s degree or equivalent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Doctorate</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
3.7. Instrumentation

In order to collect the information for the background variables, a combination of single direct and closed-ended questions was used. Reasons to expatriate were measured by adapted scales. Work performance and job satisfaction were measured by established multi-item scales. Multi-item adapted scales were used to measure the three subdimensions of career embeddedness, namely career fit, career links and career sacrifice. Multi-item Likert scales were chosen because reasons to expatriate as well as career embeddedness, work performance and job satisfaction are abstract constructs which cannot be measured directly. In addition, the use of Likert scales increases the reliability and validity of the measure (Johnson & Christensen, 2004).

3.7.1. Background variables

Age was measured by the question “What’s your age?”. The response was then dichotomized by a median cut of the distribution of responses into two groups: younger and older SIEs.

Gender was measured by the question “Gender”. There were two response categories, namely (1) = “Male” and (2) = “Female”.

Relationship status was measured by the question “What is your relationship status?”. The response categories which were provided were the following: (1) = “Single/Alone”, (2) = “Living together”, (3) = “Married without children”, (4) = “Married with children” and (5) = “Other”. The response was then dichotomized by separating not married (single/alone, living together and other) from married (married without children and married with children).

Position was measured by the question “Current position status”. The following response categories were provided: (1) = “Entry level”, (2) = “Management”, (3) = “Upper management”, (4) = “Executive (CEO/Managing director)” and (5) = “Self-employed”. The response was then
dichotomized by separating junior positions (entry level and management) from senior positions (upper management and executive/CEO/managing director).

3.7.2. Reasons to expatriate

Refugee reasons were measured by a three-item, seven-point Likert scale adapted after Selmer and Lauring (2012). Response categories ranged from (1) =”Strongly disagree” to (7) =”Strongly Agree”. A sample item is “I am bored with the lifestyle in my country”. One of the items was deleted in order to improve the reliability score and conceptual coherence. The item which was deleted was “I want to experience something new”.

Mercenary reasons were measured by a three-item, seven-point Likert scale adapted after Selmer and Lauring (2012). The response categories were the same as the ones applied for refugee reasons. A sample item is “I believe that I can earn more abroad than in my home country”.

Explorer reasons were measured by a four-item, seven-point Likert scale adapted after Selmer and Lauring (2012). The same response categories applied as for refugee reasons. The scale incorporates items measuring the desire for travelling and challenge as well as the desire to experience different cultures and to meet people from other countries. A sample item is “I desire an adventure/challenge”.

Architect reasons were measured by a four-item, seven-point Likert scale adapted after Selmer and Lauring (2012). The same response categories applied as for refugee reasons. A sample item is “I believe that international work experience will add high value to my career”.

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3.7.3. Career embeddedness, work performance and job satisfaction

Career embeddedness consists of three different subdimensions. The career sacrifice subdimension was measured by a four-item, seven-point Likert scale adopted by Tharenou and Caulfield (2010). The scale incorporates items rating to what extent career and employment opportunities, money which can be earned abroad, career benefits and business opportunities aboard would be considered sacrifices or losses, if the SIE decided to move to another country or repatriate from abroad. Response categories ranged from (1) = “Strongly disagree” to (7) = “Strongly agree”. A sample item is “The career and employment opportunities I have here”.

The subdimension career fit was measured by a three-item, seven-point Likert scale adapted after Tharenou and Caulfield (2010). The scale incorporates items rating the fit between career needs and opportunities available abroad, the fit between professional growth and what is happening in the host country, and the fit between the need for international career and the host country. The response categories were the same as the ones applied for career sacrifice. A sample item is “There is a fit between my career needs and the opportunities available in this country”.

The subdimension career links was measured by a three-item, seven-point Likert scale adapted after Adams et al. (2010). The response categories were the same as the ones applied for career sacrifice. A sample item is “I engage in a variety of career-enhancing activities”.

Work performance was measured by a four-item, seven-point Likert scale adapted after Earley (1987). The scale incorporates items rating the ability to get along with colleagues, the ability to finish assignments on time, the quality of the performance and the overall performance.
Response categories ranged from (1) = “Very poor” to (4) = Average to (7) = “Excellent”. A sample item is “How would you rate your ability to get along with other employees?”.

Job satisfaction was measured by a four-item, seven-point Likert scale adapted after West et al. (1987). The items rated the level of satisfaction with one’s performance, the appreciation of effort, overall satisfaction as well as the relationship with colleagues. Response categories ranged from (1) = “Strongly disagree” to (7) = “Strongly agree”. A sample item is “I am satisfied with the appreciation/reward system provided by the management”.

3.8. Control

Age was applied as a control variable because career embeddedness depends heavily on career stage and life stage considerations (Feldman & Ng, 2007). For instance, young parents might consider career change so that they can increase their earnings and provide their families with greater financial stability (Feldman, 2007). When people get older they would like to spend more time with their families and might also consider a career change. In addition, people get bored over time because they have to perform some tasks which they have performed hundreds of times previously. The variable was estimated by a direct question to the respondents “What’s your age?”.

Time worked for current employer was applied as a control variable because previous research on career embeddedness has shown that the amount spent within a career anchors people to their career through the links subdimension (Feldman, 2007). Moreover, the longer individuals have been in an occupation, the more contacts, and the more tacit knowledge they have, will further tie them to their career. Therefore, time worked for current employer will be used as a control variable when examining the effects of reasons to expatriate on career
embeddedness. The variable was estimated by the direct question: “How long have you worked for your current employer in the host country (in months)?”.

Position was applied as a control variable because work attitudes have been shown to vary with career stage (Super, 1984). In addition, previous studies have shown that positive relationships exist between career stage and work commitment, job involvement and job satisfaction (Adler & Aranya, 1984; Morrow & McElroy, 1987). Individuals at senior positions have more experience in their job, but might be less willing to take on new tasks and to adjust to new circumstances (Feldman, 2007). In addition, individuals at senior positions prefer security in employment and find satisfaction in comfortable work situations (Kanfer & Ackerman, 2004). Individuals at the beginning of their career, however, are more focused on advancing in their career, therefore putting more emphasis on their work performance (Panek, Staats & Hiles, 2006). Furthermore, research on work experience and work performance has shown that a positive relationship exists between the two (Quinones, Ford & Teachout, 1995). Therefore, position will be applied as a control variable when examining the effects of reasons to expatriate on work performance and job satisfaction. The variable was estimated by the question: “Current position status”.

3.9. Validity and reliability

3.9.1. Validity

There are four different types of validity which are used to evaluate the inferences made from the results of quantitative studies. These are statistical conclusion validity, internal validity, construct validity and external validity.
### 3.9.1.1. Statistical conclusion validity

Statistical conclusion validity refers to the ability to make an accurate assessment about whether two variables are related and the strength of their relationship (Johnson & Christensen, 2004). Thus, statistical validity refers to statistical inferences about whether a relationship exists between the independent and the dependent variable and an estimate of the magnitude of the relationship between them. These inferences rely on statistical tests. Making an inference about whether the variables which are investigated are related involves null hypothesis significance testing (Johnson & Christensen, 2004). The strength of the relationship between the variables involves computing effect size estimates. The relationship between the studied variables and the effect size indicators will be discussed in the results chapter of this thesis.

### 3.9.1.2. Internal validity

Internal validity is a term introduced by Campbell and Stanley (1963) and is defined as “the approximate validity with which we infer that a relationship between two variables is causal” (Cook & Campbell, 1979). Therefore, the concept is also called “causal validity”. In order for causal relationships to exist, certain criteria have to be met. First, there should be evidence that the independent and the dependent variables are related. Once there is evidence that association between the variables exists, a second condition has to be met. The second condition is that, in order to infer causation, the correct temporal ordering of the variables must be investigated and one of the variables must precede the other (Johnson & Christensen, 2004).

However, in cross-sectional research design such as the one in this thesis the correct temporal order cannot be established and it is not possible to determine whether one variable precedes the other. This is one of the threats to internal validity and is known as ambiguous
temporal precedence (Johnson & Christensen, 2004). This problem occurs because in cross-sectional studies the variables are measured at the same time. Thus, a cause and effect conclusion cannot be made.

3.9.1.3. **Construct validity**

Construct validity refers to the extent to which a higher order construct is accurately represented in a particular study. Given that some concepts are abstract in nature, they cannot be defined precisely and measured by a single item. In order to address this issue, the concepts have to be operationalized. Furthermore, the most accurate representation of a construct can be achieved by measuring it in several different ways. Using multiple measures of a construct is called multiple operationalism (Johnson & Christensen, 2004).

Therefore, concepts such as reasons to expatriate as well as career embeddedness, work performance and job satisfaction were measured by multi-item scales. In order to increase construct validity, the multi-item scales which were used were adapted from constructs used in previous studies. The multi-item scales used to measure the different variables in this thesis were discussed in the instrumentation section.

3.9.1.4. **External validity**

External validity refers to the extent to which study results can be generalized to and across populations of persons, settings, times, outcomes, and treatment variations. The main types of external validity are population validity, ecological validity, temporal validity, treatment variation validity and outcome validity (Johnson & Christensen, 2004).

Population validity refers to the ability to generalize study sample to the larger target population and across different subpopulations within the target population. Random selection
maximizes the probability that the sample will be representative of the target population (Johnson & Christensen, 2004). In this study, however, the respondents were from an accessible population and were not randomly selected which decreases the population validity.

Ecological validity refers to the degree to which the study results can be generalized across different settings. One of the threats which can affect the ability to generalize the results of a study is reactivity. Reactivity is the change in performance due to the fact of being aware that one is participating in a study (Johnson & Christensen, 2004). In this study the reactivity as well as the experimenter effect were minimized as much as possible by creating a distance between the researcher and the respondents.

Temporal validity refers to the degree to which the results of a study can be generalized across time. Temporal validity was an issue in this study because the research was conducted during one time period. The data may be valid for the time period in which it was collected, but there is no assurance that the same results would hold for SIEs and career embeddedness, work performance and job satisfaction in several years.

Treatment variation validity refers to the extent to which study results can be generalized across variations of the treatment. The administration of a treatment can vary from one time to another (Johnson & Christensen, 2004).

Outcome validity refers to the degree to which the study results can be generalized across different but related dependent variables. A way of checking for outcome validity is by looking at the effect of some independent variable and a number of related outcome measures. In this
study, the independent variables were found to influence the three dependent variables, career embeddedness, work performance and job satisfaction.

### 3.9.2. Reliability

Reliability in quantitative research refers to the degree to which a research instrument such as a questionnaire reproduces similar responses in repeated trials. One of the approaches for checking for reliability of the scale is by looking at the scale’s internal consistency. An indicator of internal consistency is the coefficient alpha also known as Cronbach’s alpha. The Cronbach’s alpha shows the degree to which the items are interrelated and a popular rule of thumb regarding its size is that it should be equal or greater than 0.7 for research purposes (Johnson & Christensen, 2004).

All the item scales had a Cronbach’s alpha value bigger than 0.7 besides the refugee reasons to expatriate (Table III). This is the reason why one of the items in the refugee reason scale was deleted. Cronbach’s alpha, however, is to a certain extent a function of the number of items. Thus, given that only two of the original three items in the scale for refugee reasons were kept, a better measure for reliability for a two-item scale was used, namely the inter-item correlation. The inter-item correlation should be with a minimum level of 0.25 (Nunnally, 1987).

### Table III. Reliability measures (N=132).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Construct</th>
<th>Number of Items</th>
<th>Cronbach’s Alpha</th>
<th>Inter-item Correlation (icc)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Refugee reasons (Life change/Escape)</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0.70</td>
<td>0.54</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mercenary reasons (Financial Incentives)</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>0.74</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Explorer reasons (Travel/Adventure)</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>0.85</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Architect reasons (Career reasons)</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>0.78</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Career embeddedness</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>0.83</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Work performance</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>0.81</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Job satisfaction</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>0.77</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
3.10. Data preparation and data analysis techniques

The online survey was designed in such a way that all questions required an answer. Therefore, in order to proceed to the subsequent questions, the respondents had to answer every question. After the data was collected electronically by means of web-based software package, it was exported and imported to a statistical package for some statistical analyses. Initially, the data contained 171 responses which also included the responses to the screening questions of respondents who did not qualify as SIEs. Therefore, these responses were deleted. There were 132 complete responses which passed both screening questions.

Given that variables such as the different reasons to expatriate, career embeddedness, work performance and job satisfaction were measured by multi-item scales, scale scores had to be calculated so that some statistical analyses could be performed. Scale scores can be computed by either taking the sum of the individual item scores or by calculating the mean of individual item scores. In this thesis the mean of the item scores will be used because it will be more meaningful and clearer to present results from which it can be easily inferred where the individual score lies on the seven-point scale. In addition, since the mean of the individual item scores is perfectly correlated with the sum of the item scores, it would not make any difference whether the mean or the sum of the individual item scores is used for correlations and regressions.

Furthermore, all the items which were used in the questionnaire were positively worded. Thus, all of them were of the same polarity and there was no need of item reversal.
In addition, the background variables relationship status and current position were dichotomized in order to be used as control variables in regressions. Thus, a new variable called marital status was computed. The respondents were divided into not married and were coded as “0” and married which were coded as “1”. The responses to the question regarding current position were divided by separating the respondents at junior positions from the respondents at senior positions. Thus, junior respondents were coded as “0” and senior respondents as “1”.

In order to check whether reasons to expatriate are differentiated by age, the sample was divided into two age groups by a median split. These two groups consisted of younger and older SIEs. Prior to checking for any differences in reasons to expatriate in terms of gender, the sample was divided into male and female SIEs.

As long as data analysis techniques are concerned, first sample means, standard deviations and zero-order Pearson correlations were computed for all variables of the study. Then one-sample t-tests were performed. The hypotheses were tested by way of hierarchical multiple regression and Multivariate Analysis of Covariance.

4. Data Analysis

Sample means, standard deviations and zero-order Pearson correlations of all variables are provided in Table IV (Appendix III). As can be seen from Table IV some of the reasons to expatriate were positively correlated meaning that the respondents may have considered more than one of the reasons to be relevant. One-sample t-tests showed that the mean scores for mercenary reasons \(t = 4.877, p < 0.001\), explorer reasons \(t = 30.579, p < 0.001\) and architect reasons \(t = 24.544, p < 0.001\) were all significantly higher than the midpoint of their respective scales (Appendix III).
Table IV. Means, standard deviations and correlations among the variables.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variables</th>
<th>Means</th>
<th>SD</th>
<th>CE</th>
<th>WP</th>
<th>JS</th>
<th>RR</th>
<th>MR</th>
<th>ER</th>
<th>AR</th>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Age</th>
<th>Position</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Career embeddedness</td>
<td>5.05</td>
<td>0.94</td>
<td>1.00</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Work performance</td>
<td>5.94</td>
<td>0.64</td>
<td>0.15</td>
<td>1.00</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Job satisfaction</td>
<td>5.52</td>
<td>0.89</td>
<td>0.03</td>
<td>0.50**</td>
<td>1.00</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Refugee reasons</td>
<td>4.28</td>
<td>1.64</td>
<td>0.13</td>
<td>0.04</td>
<td>-0.12</td>
<td>1.00</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mercenary reasons</td>
<td>4.60</td>
<td>1.41</td>
<td>0.37**</td>
<td>0.06</td>
<td>-0.02</td>
<td>0.24**</td>
<td>1.00</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Explorer reasons</td>
<td>6.12</td>
<td>0.80</td>
<td>-0.01</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>0.05</td>
<td>0.13</td>
<td>-0.10</td>
<td>1.00</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Architect reasons</td>
<td>5.87</td>
<td>0.88</td>
<td>0.43**</td>
<td>0.22**</td>
<td>0.06</td>
<td>0.03</td>
<td>0.36**</td>
<td>0.14</td>
<td>1.00</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Time worked for current employer</td>
<td>19.41</td>
<td>25.53</td>
<td>0.04</td>
<td>-0.01</td>
<td>0.01</td>
<td>0.14</td>
<td>0.15</td>
<td>-0.02</td>
<td>-0.18*</td>
<td>1.00</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Age</td>
<td>29.11</td>
<td>7.78</td>
<td>-0.22*</td>
<td>-0.05</td>
<td>-0.02</td>
<td>0.15</td>
<td>0.08</td>
<td>-0.06</td>
<td>-0.29**</td>
<td>0.51**</td>
<td>1.00</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Position</td>
<td>0.05</td>
<td>0.21*</td>
<td>0.23*</td>
<td>0.01</td>
<td>0.24**</td>
<td>-0.05</td>
<td>0.08</td>
<td>0.14</td>
<td>0.35**</td>
<td>1.00</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Notes: * p < 0.05; ** p < 0.01 (two-tailed test); 122 < n < 133 due to missing answers
Refugee reasons ($t = 1.935, p < 0.1$) were not statistically significant at 0.05 significance level which means that the null hypothesis that the population mean is equal to 4 could not be rejected. Thus, the respondents generally agreed that a desire for adventure and travelling, career enhancing opportunities and financial incentives had influenced their decision to expatriate with desire for travelling and adventure being the most influential reason to expatriate.

One-sample $t$-test for career embeddedness ($t = 12.790, p < 0.001$), work performance ($t = 34.896, p < 0.001$) and job satisfaction ($t = 19.685, p < 0.001$) showed that their mean scores were significantly higher than the midpoint of their respective scales. This suggests that the respondents generally perceived themselves as anchored in their career, as performing well at their work and as being satisfied with their jobs.

Time worked for current employer was not correlated in a statistically significant way with the dependent variables. However, previous research on career embeddedness has shown that the amount spent within a career anchors people to their career through the links subdimension (Feldman, 2007). Therefore, time worked for current employer will be used as a control variable when examining the effects of reasons to expatriate on career embeddedness. Furthermore, age will be used as a control variable as well because it was negatively correlated in a statistically significant way with career embeddedness ($r = -0.22, p < 0.05$).

The need to use position as a control variable was indicated by the significant positive associations between position and work performance ($r = 0.21, p < 0.05$) and position and job satisfaction ($r = 0.23, p < 0.05$).
4.1 Hierarchical multiples regressions

The hypotheses were formally tested by means of hierarchical multiple regression (Table V and Table VI; Appendix IV). First, the relationship between reasons to expatriate and career embeddedness was examined. The control variables time worked for current employer and age were entered in Step 1. As can be seen from Table V there was a significant positive association between time spent working for the current employer and career embeddedness ($beta = 0.20, p < 0.05$). Age, however, was negatively related to career embeddedness ($beta = -0.33, p < 0.01$). Adjusted $R^2$ of 0.07 showed that 7 percent of the variance in the dependent variable career embeddedness can be accounted for by time spent working for the current employer and age.

Table V. Results of hierarchical regression for effects of reasons to expatriate on career embeddedness

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Step 1 (Control variables)</th>
<th>Career Embeddedness</th>
<th>( \beta )</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Time spent working for the current employer</td>
<td></td>
<td>0.20*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Age</td>
<td></td>
<td>-0.33**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$R$</td>
<td></td>
<td>0.28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$R^2$ Adjusted</td>
<td></td>
<td>0.07</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$F$</td>
<td></td>
<td>5.56**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Step 2 (Main effects)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Refugee reasons</td>
<td></td>
<td>0.11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mercenary reasons</td>
<td></td>
<td>0.19*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Explorer reasons</td>
<td></td>
<td>-0.19*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Architect reasons</td>
<td></td>
<td>0.34***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$R$</td>
<td></td>
<td>0.57</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Change in $R^2$</td>
<td></td>
<td>0.24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$R^2$ Adjusted</td>
<td></td>
<td>0.29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$F$</td>
<td></td>
<td>10.00***</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* $p < 0.05$, ** $p < 0.01$, *** $p < 0.001$; two-tailed
In Step 2, the four variables depicting cognitive and affective reasons to expatriate were entered in the model. As displayed in Table V the reasons to expatriate produced significant effect on career embeddedness. The four variables depicting reasons to expatriate explained 24 percent of the variance in career embeddedness. Refugee reasons did not generate any statistically significant association with career embeddedness. Mercenary reasons had a significant positive association with career embeddedness (beta = 0.19, p < 0.05). There was a significant negative association between explorer reasons and career embeddedness (beta = - 0.19; p < 0.05). Architect reasons had significant positive relationship with career embeddedness (beta = 0.34, p < 0.001). The F values for the predictor variables of career embeddedness were statistically significant meaning that a proper fit between the regression model and the data existed.

Second, the relationships between reasons to expatriate and work performance, and reasons to expatriate and job satisfaction were examined. The control variable position was entered in Step 1. As seen in Table VI there was a significant positive association with work performance and job satisfaction. The control variable position had a positive association with work performance (beta = 0.21, p < 0.05) and job satisfaction (beta = 0.23, p < 0.05). The control variable position explained 3 percent of the variance in work performance and 4 percent of the variance in job satisfaction.

In Step 2, the four variables depicting cognitive and affective reasons to expatriate were entered in the model. As displayed in Table VI, only architect reasons produced a significant effect on work performance (beta = 0.21, p < 0.05). Refugee reasons had a negative association with job satisfaction (beta = - 0.16; p < 0.10). Mercenary reasons, explorer reasons and architect
reasons did not have a significant association with job satisfaction. All the F values were statistically significant indicating a proper fit between the regression model and the data.

These results provide support for hypotheses $H1c$, $H3a$, $H4a$ and $H4b$.

**Table VI.** Results of hierarchical regression for effects of reasons to expatriate on work performance and job satisfaction

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Work Performance</th>
<th>Job satisfaction</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Step 1 (Control variables)</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Position</td>
<td>0.21*</td>
<td>0.23*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>R</td>
<td>0.21</td>
<td>0.23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$R^2$ Adjusted</td>
<td>0.03</td>
<td>0.04</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F</td>
<td>5.32*</td>
<td>6.60*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Step 2 (Main effects)</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Refugee reasons</td>
<td>0.05</td>
<td>-0.16†</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mercenary reasons</td>
<td>-0.05</td>
<td>-0.09</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Explorer reasons</td>
<td>-0.02</td>
<td>0.04</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Architect reasons</td>
<td>0.21*</td>
<td>0.08</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>R</td>
<td>0.29</td>
<td>0.30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Change in $R^2$</td>
<td>0.04</td>
<td>0.04</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$R^2$ Adjusted</td>
<td>0.05</td>
<td>0.05</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F</td>
<td>2.15†</td>
<td>2.36*</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

†p<0.10; *p<0.05, ** p<0.01, *** p<0.001; two-tailed

4.2. Multivariate Analyses of Covariance

One-way Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) was used to detect any intergroup differences among the background variables for younger and older SIEs. Such differences existed in the case of marital status and position. Therefore, these background variables will be used as control variables in the analysis of inter-group differences between younger and older SIEs.

In addition, one-way ANOVA was applied to detect any inter-group differences among the background variables for male and female SIEs. It was discovered that such differences
existed in the case of age, time worked for current employer, marital status and position. Therefore, these background variables will be used as control variables in the analysis of inter-group differences between male and female SIEs.

Between-group differences were examined through two 4 x 2 Multivariate Analyses of Covariance (Appendix V). As displayed in Table VII, there was a significant multivariate effect for the age groups ($F = 3.85, p < 0.01$). Results of ANCOVA indicated a significant between-group difference for refugee reasons ($F = 9.14, p < 0.01$). In this case older SIEs had a higher mean score than the one of younger SIEs. A Partial Eta Squared of 0.07 shows that 7 percent of the variance in refugee reasons can be accounted for by age.

**Table VII. MANCOVA and ANCOVA for reasons to expatriate by age**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Reason</th>
<th>Younger Mean (SD)</th>
<th>Older Mean (SD)</th>
<th>Multi-variate effect</th>
<th>Uni-variate F ratios</th>
<th>Partial Eta Squared</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Refugee reasons</td>
<td>3.80 (1.65)</td>
<td>4.69 (1.51)</td>
<td>3.85**</td>
<td>9.14**</td>
<td>0.07</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mercenary reasons</td>
<td>4.52 (1.33)</td>
<td>4.55 (1.49)</td>
<td>0.71</td>
<td>0.01</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Explorer reasons</td>
<td>6.21 (0.83)</td>
<td>6.04 (0.75)</td>
<td>1.07</td>
<td>0.01</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Architect reasons</td>
<td>5.97 (0.80)</td>
<td>5.80 (0.83)</td>
<td>0.70</td>
<td>0.01</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

†$p<0.10$, *$p<0.05$, **$p<0.01$

a $n = 123$ due to missing values

b Covariates: marital status, position.

Table VIII shows that a significant overall effect was detected for the gender groups of the SIEs ($F = 2.90, p < 0.05$). Uni-variate F tests displayed a significant between-group difference for mercenary reasons ($F = 3.17, p < 0.10$), explorer reasons ($F = 4.58, p < 0.05$) and
architect reasons ($F = 4.28, p < 0.05$). In the cases of mercenary reasons and architect reasons male SIEs had higher mean scores than female expatriates. Partial Eta Squared of 0.03 and 0.04 showed that 3 and 4 percent of the variance of mercenary reasons and architect reasons respectively can be accounted for by gender. In the case of explorer reasons females SIEs had a higher mean score than male SIEs. Partial Eta Squared of 0.04 showed that 4 percent of the variance of explorer reasons can be accounted for by gender. These results showed support for $H5$ and $H6$.

Therefore, the results of the hierarchical multiple regressions and the Multivariate Analyses of Covariance provided support for $H1c$, $H3a$, $H4a$, $H4b$, $H5$ and $H6$. No support was found for $H1a$, $H1b$, $H2$ and $H3c$.

**Table VIII.** MANCOVA and ANCOVA for reasons to expatriate by gender $^{ab}$

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Reasons</th>
<th>Male Mean (SD)</th>
<th>Female Mean (SD)</th>
<th>Multi-variate effect</th>
<th>Uni-variate F ratios</th>
<th>Partial Eta Squared</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Refugee reasons</td>
<td>4.34 (1.55)</td>
<td>4.12 (1.73)</td>
<td>2.90*</td>
<td>0.63</td>
<td>0.01</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mercenary reasons</td>
<td>4.80 (1.27)</td>
<td>4.27 (1.48)</td>
<td>3.17†</td>
<td></td>
<td>0.03</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Explorer reasons</td>
<td>5.97 (0.92)</td>
<td>6.28 (0.62)</td>
<td>4.58*</td>
<td></td>
<td>0.04</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Architect reasons</td>
<td>6.04 (0.82)</td>
<td>5.74 (0.79)</td>
<td>4.28*</td>
<td></td>
<td>0.04</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*p<0.05, †p<0.10

$a$ n = 123 due to missing values.

$b$ Covariates: age, time worked for current employer, marital status, position.
5. Discussion

5.1. Main findings

This study examined reasons to expatriate of SIEs and how they are related to career embeddedness, work performance and job satisfaction as well as differences in reasons for expatriation in terms of age and gender. Drawing from previous research (e.g. Richardson & McKenna, 2002; Selmer & Lauring, 2012), it was hypothesized that reasons to expatriate affect work performance and job satisfaction. Furthermore, it was hypothesized that career embeddedness, a new concept which was applied to the self-initiated expatriate literature, was also influenced by the different reasons to expatriate.

It can be seen from the previous Results section that mercenary reasons, explorer reasons and architect reasons all had significantly higher mean score than the midpoint in their scales. Refugee reasons, however, did not have a statistically significant higher mean score than the scale midpoint. These results imply that respondents generally agreed that a desire for travelling and adventure, career enhancing opportunities and financial incentives had influenced their decision to expatriate. These findings are partly consistent with previous quantitative research on SIEs (Selmer & Lauring, 2012, 2013a). In this study refugee reasons did not seem as important as the other reasons to expatriate but did not have a lower mean score than the scale midpoint. This could be due to the fact that previous quantitative research on reasons to expatriate of SIEs investigated SIE academics while in this study SIEs from both the public and the private sector were researched.

When examining the relationships between reasons to expatriate and career embeddedness as predicted by the study, it may be presumed that the cognitive reasons to expatriate, namely mercenary reasons and architect reasons, could increase career
embeddedness. A striking finding was that there was a negative association between the affective explorer reasons and career embeddedness. Hence, explorer reasons may reduce levels of career embeddedness. This could be due to the fact that people whose expatriation is driven by a desire for travelling and adventure might lose their focus on building their career in order to be satisfied with their current situation. In addition, affect-driven decisions such as the decision to expatriate for explorer reasons are likely to have a negative effect on the outcome which was desired because they are usually not well-thought-out and are more extreme (Pham & Avnet, 2009). Relocating and working abroad can be very stressful and emotion-oriented stress-coping is less effective than problem-oriented stress-coping (Herman & Tetrick, 2009). Furthermore, individuals who expatriate for explorer reasons might choose locations which are very different from their home countries and that could present personal challenges as well as challenges to finding a job relevant to their career (Richardson & McKenna, 2000).

It was hypothesized that refugee reasons are negatively related to career embeddedness because individuals who expatriate in order to experience new things and because they are bored with their home countries might be more inclined to consider a career change. However, there was no empirical evidence that this was the case. This could be explained by the fact that some SIEs who expatriate for refugee reasons might receive better career opportunities abroad because their skills might be considered more valuable abroad than in their home countries.

The associations between reasons to expatriate and work performance and reasons to expatriate and job satisfaction imply that architect reasons may facilitate work performance while refugee reason may reduce job satisfaction. These results are similar to the findings in Selmer and Lauring’s (2012) quantitative study.
Furthermore, a large proportion of the SIEs in this study were from developing countries (Appendix II). Thus, it may be speculated that the negative relationship between refugee reasons and job satisfaction is due to the fact that SIEs relocating from developing countries to developed countries might have expatriated not by choice but by necessity which in turn reduces their job satisfaction (Al Ariss & Özbilgin, 2010).

Surprisingly, mercenary reasons were not related to work performance and job satisfaction. This is unexpected because the SIEs who were investigated included individuals from both the private and the public sector and business expatriates are usually motivated by financial incentives. A possible explanation for the fact that mercenary reasons is not a unique predictor of work performance and job satisfaction is the division of mercenary reasons into both push and pull factors (Selmer & Lauring, 2012). Explorer reasons also did not have any relationship with job satisfaction. The findings regarding mercenary reasons and explorer reasons are similar to the results of previous quantitative studies which adds to the robustness of the findings of this study (Selmer & Lauring, 2012). The discrepancies in the two studies could be explained by the differences in the target populations.

Furthermore, it is interesting to note that both age and gender differentiated some of the reasons to expatriate. In the case of age, refugee reasons were different between younger and older expatriates. The fact that older people had stronger reasons to expatriate related to life changes and escaping was surprising given that previous literature has shown that older people tend to place more importance on their families (Jang & Wu, 2006). However, a possible interpretation of these findings could be related to the fact that a large proportion of the SIEs in the sample were from developing countries. Thus, SIEs might have relocated to developed nations not so much by choice but by necessity in order to escape from undesirable living conditions.
conditions in their home countries (Al Ariss & Özbilgin, 2010). Another explanation could be that chronological age was used as a measure rather than biological, psychological or social measures of aging (Kooij et al., 2008).

With regard to gender, it was found that mercenary reasons, explorer reasons and architect reasons were different between male and female respondents. The findings show that male SIEs are more motivated by financial incentives and career enhancing opportunities. This is in line with previous empirical studies which found that men are more extrinsically motivated and that they are more motivated by money than women are (Bhagat & Williams, 2008; Mahmoud, 1996). In addition, the fact that men were more motivated by career enhancing opportunities is consistent with previous research showing that men are more interested in their careers than women are (Bartol & Manhardt, 1979).

Explorer reasons were also differentiated by gender. It was found that female SIEs were more motivated by a desire for travelling and adventure. This could be explained by the fact that the decision to expatriate for explorer reasons is affect-driven and females are found to be more sensitive and emotional than men (Gove, 1994).

In this study the dichotomy of cognitive- and affective-driven decisions was used to investigate the relation between reasons to expatriate and career embeddedness, work performance and job satisfaction of SIEs. It can be concluded from the findings that the theory seems to have guided the research design well. Furthermore, it can be summarized from the findings that age and gender could make a difference as to why SIEs relocate abroad. These findings are important for practical implications as they could be associated with other outcomes. However, while the main contribution of this study was to evaluate quantitatively how reasons to expatriate are related to career embeddedness of SIEs, more research needs to be done in order to
understand better how motives for expatriation are related to career embeddedness. More specifically, it might be interesting to investigate the antecedents and consequences of SIEs feeling bound to their careers (Adams et al., 2010).

5.2. Limitations

The findings of the study have to be interpreted in light of some limitations associated with it. The sample size was relatively small which could limit to what extent the study findings can be generalized. Moreover, while the sample was relatively diverse, most of the SIEs were from Europe which could further limit the findings’ generalizability. SIEs coming from South Africa or from America might have completely different reasons for seeking employment abroad than Europeans (Andresen, Biemann & Pattie, 2012).

Moreover, the sampling method which was used was the snowball sampling. However, random sampling maximizes the probability that the sample will be representative of the target population (Johnson & Christensen, 2004).

Furthermore, all the data was collected via self-reports which may have artificially increased the strength of some of the relationships. However, information regarding cognitive and affective reasons to expatriate might be impossible to collect from other sources because alternative sources might be simply not available. As long as the assessment of career embeddedness, work performance and job satisfaction are concerned, alternative sources such as team leaders or managers could be used.

In addition, the three subdimension of career embeddedness can be influenced by additional factors. This is due to the fact that the links and fit subdimensions can be conceptualized in terms of both work and community. Thus, religious and social norms in the
present community as well as the personal congruence with the leisure activities and daily routines available in a community can further embed SIEs in their career.

Another limitation which may restrict the extent to which the results are generalizable is the fact that the questions regarding the reasons to expatriate were in a retrospective form. Thus, the results regarding reasons to relocate and work abroad may have been biased by memory effects (Sikkel, 1985; Smith, 1984). Thus, it could be the case that SIEs do not remember the initial reason to expatriate which can be explained by the fact that initial reasons to expatriate may change over time because self-initiated expatriation is a continuous process (Selmer & Lauring, 2013a).

In addition, although several background variables were controlled for in the hierarchical multiple regressions as well as in the MANCOVA/ANCOVAs, there could have been other relevant control variables which were not included because they were not measured initially. Last, but not least, due to the cross-sectional research design of the study, it is impossible to determine any causal links between the studied variables. A longitudinal research design would be more appropriate in order to determine and explain causality (de Vaus, 2001).

5.3. Implications

The purpose of this thesis was to investigate the impact of reasons to expatriate on career embeddedness, work performance and job satisfaction of SIEs. Furthermore, the investigation explored whether reasons to expatriate are differentiated by age and gender. As a result, a number of theoretical and practical implications as well as suggestions for future research arise.

Theoretically, the conceptual framework of cognitive vs. affective reasons to expatriate could be refined further (Kobbelvedt & Wolff, 2009; Selmer & Lauring, 2013a). In addition, motives to expatriate could be considered in terms of push and pull factors and their effect on
career embeddedness, work performance and job satisfaction could be investigated. In the case of career research, there is also a need to warrant greater attention to career embeddedness in terms of cognitive and affect-driven decisions (Feldman & Ng, 2007). Furthermore, research should not treat SIEs as a homogenous group which is motivated by the same reasons to expatriate. This is due to the fact that different demographic characteristics are linked to different reasons to expatriate (Selmer & Lauring, 2010).

In practical terms, several implications can be drawn from the findings. First, organizations recruiting SIEs may wish to enquire about the job applicants’ reasons for expatriation. Thus, candidates who state that their expatriation was driven by refugee reasons might experience lower job satisfaction. Therefore, there should be very good reasons why the candidate should be hired. SIEs quoting mercenary reasons as their primary reasons to expatriate might be more embedded in their career but hiring managers should not make any inferences regarding their work performance and job satisfaction. SIEs claiming that their expatriation was driven by explorer reasons are more likely to change career paths which does not necessarily mean, however, that their work performance and job satisfaction will be low. Candidates stating that their expatriation was driven by architect reasons should be favoured, because higher levels of career embeddedness and work performance can be expected of such candidates. Furthermore, organizations hiring SIEs who claim that their expatriation was driven by architect reasons should provide those SIEs with opportunities for career growth and development.

In addition, given that there could be differences in the reasons to expatriate with regard to age and gender, hiring managers could take into account those differences when making hiring decisions. For instance, recruiters could pay more attention to older SIEs who claim that they have expatriated for refugee reasons as this could indicate the candidate’s level of commitment.
or future job satisfaction. Taking gender-related differences into account, recruiters could pay attention to the importance male candidates put on mercenary and architect reasons and females put on explorer reasons. When making hiring decisions, job qualifications and career history are of crucial importance. Nevertheless, the above-mentioned implications can be used as well to further support the decision.

Last, but not least, if individuals have chosen their career wisely and after careful consideration, their career embeddedness could create a self-reinforcing, positive cycle. In contrast, SIEs’ career embeddedness which is a result of lack of initiative and a series of bad outcomes could lead to prolonged plateaued performance and frustration (Feldman, 2007).

5.4. Suggestions for future studies

There are a number of opportunities for future research. Future studies might try to eliminate some of the weaknesses of the current investigation. For instance, the instrument which was used to measure career embeddedness could be improved by adding other factors which are relevant to career embeddedness such as community and personal congruence with leisure activities. Furthermore, future quantitative studies could also test the relationship between reasons to expatriate of SIEs and career embeddedness.

In addition, work performance and job satisfaction could be based on supervisors’ reports rather than self-reports. Moreover, a longitudinal approach may be applied in order to capture to what extent the initial reasons to expatriate as well as career embeddedness can change over time. The study’s scope can also be extended by adding other dependent variables which could be influenced by reasons to expatriate such as career mobility and success as well as other work outcomes (Feldman & Ng, 2007). Future studies might also try to detect any moderating effects of background variables such as career stage, marital status, previous
expatriate experience, age and gender on the relationships between reasons to expatriate, career embeddedness and work outcomes (Selmer & Lauring, 2013a).

6. Conclusion

The purpose of this thesis was to examine the effects of cognitive and affective reasons to expatriate on career embeddedness, work performance and job satisfaction of SIEs. In addition, differences in reasons for expatriation in terms of age and gender were also investigated. The study introduced the relatively new concept of career embeddedness to the SIE literature. The findings of this thesis are important because of several reasons but primarily because self-initiated expatriation is becoming a widespread phenomenon.

Nevertheless, the literature on SIEs is still scarce and not enough is known about how the reasons to relocate influence career embeddedness, work performance and job satisfaction of SIEs. In addition, little is known about how reasons to expatriate may be affected by age and gender. Therefore, this study is a contribution to the growing literature on SIEs in general as well as in terms of SIEs’ career and work.

Building on previous literature on SIE academics, four categories of reasons to expatriate were investigated: refugee, mercenary, explorer and architect (Richardson & McKenna, 2002, 2003; Selmer & Lauring, 2011, 2013a). Moreover, these four categories were divided into cognitive- and affect-driven reasons to expatriate and their effects on career embeddedness, work performance and job satisfaction were investigated. An interesting finding was the negative association between the affective explorer reasons to expatriate and career embeddedness while the cognitive mercenary and architect reasons were positively related to career embeddedness.
Furthermore, it was found that inherent demographics such as age and gender could differentiate the reasons for expatriation of SIEs. Although this thesis has several limitations and can be improved in many ways, its findings may have some important theoretical and practical implications.
References

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