

**How does the work role affect expatriates work adjustment? A study of German expatriates in Central and Eastern Europe.**

**Abstract:**

Central and Eastern Europe (CEE) has emerged as attracted a high amount of FDI over the past two decades which is accompanied by an increasing number of foreign assignments into this region. Based on data of 115 German expatriates, this paper analyzes how dimensions of the work role influence work adjustment in CEE. The data provide statistical support for the detrimental effects of role conflicts on work adjustment. Furthermore, a significant positive impact on work adjustment is found for role clarity. Role flexibility and role novelty seem to have no impact on work adjustment. Results, limitations and implications are discussed.

**Key words:**

Expatriate, work adjustment, work role, CEE, emerging markets

## **How does the work role affect expatriates work adjustment? A study of German expatriates in Central and Eastern Europe.**

### **1. Work role and work adjustment in the CEE-region: Context, objective, and structure**

Central and Eastern Europe (CEE) has emerged as an attractive market for countries from other regions of the world and has consequently attracted a high amount of foreign direct investment (FDI). Parallel to this development, the number of foreign assignments into this region has increased. Particularly Western European countries have established subsidiaries in this region since the breakdown of the communist system in 1989. Particularly trade between CEE-countries and Germany as well as German FDI has risen significantly. In 2007, 11 percent of all German imports and exports were related to Central Europe and Eastern Europe, which exceeds the trade with traditionally important partners such as France. Furthermore, CEE countries do not only serve as an important market, but also as an attractive destination of German FDI. In the period between 1995 and 2006, the FDI of German companies in CEE accumulated to nearly 65 billion Euros. This accounts for 10 percent of all German FDI within this period. With 12.4 billion Euros, most of the German FDI flew into the Czech Republic, followed by 12.2 billion Euros to Hungary and 10 billion Euros to Poland (e.g., Roman, 2007). By the end of 2006, more than 10.000 German companies had carried out direct investments in the CEE region.

The high amount of German FDI is paralleled by a distinct shortage of qualified local staff. Key middle and top management positions could not be filled with qualified local staff. Consequently, companies are sending expatriates to their business units in the CEE-host-countries in order to launch, maintain, and support their business activities abroad. Whereas foreign assignments of home country nationals could eventually be considered a desirable strategic option – depending on a company's strategic orientation in the notion of Heenan and Perlmutter (1979) – current literature on expatriation suggests that assignments also pose significant challenges and are a crucial factor of firm performance

abroad. As expatriation predominantly takes place within a business context, successful work role adjustment is of considerable importance. Peterson (2003) concludes that the expatriation of managers into the CEE-region is associated with a considerable change in the work role. Morley, Burke & O'Regan (1996), Morley, Burke & Finn (1999) as well as Andreason (2003) found similar results. The theoretical significance of further research on the association of a changing work role and adjustment in a CEE-context is due to the lack of studies within this region. While work role issues of Western expatriates in leading industrialized regions like Western Europe, the United States or Japan have already been subject to intense research (e.g., Black, 1990; Black & Gregersen 1991; Morley & Flynn 2003; Lii & Wong 2008), the relationship between the work role and adjustment in a CEE-context has found considerably less academic interest until recent. As the CEE-countries play a particularly important role for German companies, the adjustment of German expatriates within this region is argued to be of high practical significance.

Thus, the *objective* is to analyze how expatriates' work roles on assignments in CEE countries influence the cultural adjustment. The particular focus is on the association of the work role and the work-adjustment dimension of cultural adjustment (Black, 1988; Black, Mendenhal & Oddou, 1991). The study is based on questionnaires of 115 German expatriates on foreign assignments in Poland, Romania, Russia, the Czech Republic and Hungary.

The paper is *structured* as follows: First, previous works on work roles and work adjustment are reviewed. Building on previous findings, hypotheses for work adjustment for expatriates on foreign assignments in CEE-countries are derived. The paper proceeds with details on the method and the empirical study conducted. The hypotheses will be tested and the impact of single elements of the work role in the CEE on the work adjustment dimension is assessed. Subsequently, the results are discussed. The paper concludes with a brief summary of major findings and implications for future research.

## **2. Dimensions of the work role and the work-related adjustment**

In line with the previous literature (e.g., Black, 1990), cultural adjustment in this paper is understood as "the degree of psychological adjustment experienced by the individual or the degree of psychological comfort and familiarity that the individual has of the new environment." Although adjustment is seen as a three-dimensional construct, consisting of the adjustment to the work in the host country, adjustment to the general environment, and adjustment to the interaction with host country nationals (e.g. Black, 1990), this study focuses on work adjustment as the workplace is considered as a major setting of the foreign assignment. For instance, Breiden, Mohr & Mirza (2006) argue that the success of a foreign assignment strongly depends on the adjustment to work in the host country.

The different characteristics of the work role in the host country as compared to the work role in the home country determine the expatriates work adjustment. The degree of adjustment depends primarily on to what extent the different work role elements reduce or raise expatriates' perceived insecurity concerning their new activity areas (Black, Mendenhall & Oddou 1991; McEvoy & Parker, 1995).

According to Black, Mendenhall & Oddou (1991), four different aspects of work roles can be differentiated; namely role clarity, role flexibility, role novelty, and role conflict. Role novelty as well as role conflict raise the insecurity and analogous with national adjustment research (Schröder, 1987; Brett, 1980) are argued to be obstructive in relation to the work adjustment. However, role flexibility and role clarity provide a feeling of security and therefore, positively affect the work adjustment. The single dimensions of the work role are discussed in more detail in the following and corresponding hypotheses are generated.

*Role flexibility:* A first dimension of the work role that is argued to influence the expatriates' adjustment to work is argued to be role flexibility or role discretion, i.e. the possibility for

the expatriate to construct the professional position according to his own perceptions. Black & Gregersen (1991, p. 501) emphasize the central meaning for the adjustment to this factor: "[R]ole discretion is important because it allows individuals to adapt their work roles and setting to themselves rather than adapting themselves to the situation [ ] greater role discretion makes it easier for individuals to utilize previous behaviour patterns, which in turn, reduces uncertainty [...] and facilitates adjustment ." The positive influence on work adjustment finds empirical support in a number of studies (Birdseye & Hill 1995; Black, 1988, 1990; Black & Gregersen 1991).

The degree of role flexibility depends in particular on the level of autonomy that the parent company allows the foreign unit. If the level of autonomy is low – e.g., when the foreign unit is of strategic meaning for the parent – the expatriate will tend to have rather low flexibility in constructing his work role according to his/her own perceptions. In the same line of reasoning, role flexibility tends to be high if the subsidiary has a high level of autonomy. This is particularly the case, when the subsidiary serves primarily the local market (Jarillo & Martinez, 1990; Schmid & Kutschker, 2003). Depending on the degree of flexibility, the work adjustment is affected. It could be argued that in contexts with high autonomy and – in consequence – high role flexibility, work adjustment will be rather simple, as the expatriate can shape his/her role better according to own preferences. Thus, the following hypothesis is derived:

*Hypothesis 1: Role flexibility has a positive impact on expatriate work adjustment.*

**Role clarity:** This dimension of the work role is determined by the transparency of the rules an expatriate has to obey. If expatriates are able to clearly identify the tasks and responsibilities related to their assignment they are better able to reduce the degree of insecurity resulting from a lack of clarity. Again, this makes the expatriate's work adjustment more likely (Black & Gregersen 1991). Several studies (e.g., Black, 1990, Black & Gregersen 1991) have found empirical support for this association. It could be argued that role clarity depends on a clear role description by the company and an

understanding of this description by the expatriate. This relationship seems to be less affected by the country context than other dimensions of the work role. In consequence, the country context of this study will not be further discussed here and on the basis of the previous considerations, the following hypothesis is postulated:

*Hypothesis 2: Role clarity has a positive impact on expatriate work adjustment.*

*Role novelty:* This dimension of the work role is defined as "the degree to which the current role is different from past roles" (Andreason, 2003, p. 46). It does not only encompass different tasks or responsibilities of the actual assignment as compared to the position held before the assignment per se, but also the degree to which the assignment is affected by differing technical, social, and economic aspects (Andreason, 2003.). Shaffer, Harrison & Gilley (1999) confirm this relationship. Other studies could not confirm this association. For instance, the study of Black (1988) does not show any significant effects for the case of U.S. Americans in Japan, which the author justifies as follows: "It may be that in an international transfer so much is novel [...] that the impact of role novelty is diluted." In a study of Feldman & Thompson (1993), even positive consequences of role novelty on work adjustment are found as a result of a motivating element for the expatriate.

For the CEE-countries a differing technical, social, and economic environment as compared to Germany is to be expected. Also in the areas of law and legal security, discrepancies still exist, which coincide with insufficient protection against economic crime and corruption (Gorzka, 2004; Meffert, 2004; Hauler, 2005). Thus, the expatriate will be confronted with circumstances, which lead to unfamiliar working situations that require adjustment in the workplace. Furthermore, the expatriate is confronted with the management of employees, who have different perceptions of hierarchical thinking compared to German employees, which requires him to take on a different management role. In comparison to the work with German employees, expatriates should avoid independent decision-making as well as a complete takeover of responsibility (Holtbrügge, 1995; Yoosefi & Thomas, 2003).

The differences are the larger the more the conditions in CEE-countries differ from those in Germany. It can be argued that the insecurity linked with role novelty affects, in the end, negatively affects the expatriates' work adjustment. Thus, the following hypothesis is derived:

*Hypothesis 3: Role novelty has a negative impact on expatriate work adjustment.*

*Role conflict:* The final dimension of the work role relates to the assumption that expatriates are exposed to different expectations from several different stakeholders. A central function of foreign expatriates is to correspond to the professional requirements and expectations in the host country while keeping the goals of the parent company in mind, which could be contrary to those of the subsidiary (Barking & Harrison, 1996; Banai & Reisel, 1993). Andreason (2003) argues that, "the underlying problem is that the role is defined in one country but performed in another." Thus, the goals are given by the parent company; however, they can stand in conflict with the professional requirements in the host country as well as the expectations of the local employees. To overcome this conflict often forms a major challenge of a foreign assignment. The negative consequences of this prominent form of role conflicts on work adjustment were also empirically confirmed by a number of previous studies (e.g., Black & Gregersen, 1991; Suutari & Riusala, 1998).

It is argued in this paper that expatriates in CEE-countries are likely to experience role conflicts due to the different expectations of host country members as well as different expectations in the parent company. For instance, different views of bribery (Meffert, 2004), or time and work attitudes in Germany and CEE can lead to conflicts. Thus, role conflicts might pose a significant challenge for Western expatriates in CEE-settings. In line with the previous discussion, the following hypothesis is derived:

*Hypothesis 4: Role conflicts have a negative impact on expatriate work adjustment.*

Figure 1 presents the underlying model for this study and summarizes the four hypotheses generated above.

====

Insert figure 1 about here

====

### **3. Method**

#### *3.1 Sample*

The sample of the subsequent study consists of German expatriates, who were assigned to the CEE countries Poland, Rumania, Russia, the Czech Republic, and Hungary. The potential respondents were identified via a database research at the German chambers of foreign trade, the Hoppenstedt-Database as well as further internet research. This process provided contact details of 778 German expatriate managers in CEE countries. All expatriates identified were sent an email questionnaire. As a result of incorrect or out-of-date email addresses, only 568 questionnaires could be transmitted to the potential respondents. Within a period of two weeks, two reminders were sent. In total, 115 questionnaires were returned which equals a response rate of 20.2 percent. 87 percent of the respondents were male and 12% females. This proportion of men to women roughly mirrors the gender-distribution for managers in German corporations. (e.g., Caligiuri & Lazarova 2002; PriceWaterhouseCoopers, 2005). The average age of the respondents was 41.2 years with a total distribution ranging from 22 to 64 years. The sample particularly includes expatriates from large companies: A number of 77 people (67.5%) worked in companies with more than 5,000 employees, 25 of the respondents (21.9%) worked in companies with 500 to 4,999 employees. Skilled workers and managers of small and medium-sized companies accounted for a rather small percentage of the sample (10.5 %).

### 3.2 *Work adjustment as the dependent variable*

The expatriates' adjustment to work is based on items developed by Black (1988) and Black & Stephens (1989). These items describe, "the degree of adjustment they felt with their job and responsibilities, with interacting with local peers and subordinates" (Black, 1988, p. 283). The participants of the study were asked to rate their cultural adjustment on a seven-point Likert-scale with the range from "not at all" to "very good" regarding their adjustment to "performance standards and expectations", "performance and leader responsibility" and "professional and departmental responsibility". These three items form the variable "work adjustment" (WORK\_ADJ). In the present study, WORK\_ADJ provides an internal reliability with a Cronbach's alpha value of 0.709 which - According to Wittenberg (1998), provides a satisfactory degree of reliability (Cronbach's Alpha  $\geq$  0.70).

### 3.3 *Dimensions of the work role as independent variable*

In order to measure for the dimensions of the work role, the study again orients on previous measures which found acceptance in the literature. *Role flexibility* (RO\_FLEX) was measured using items suggested by Black (1988). Questions were asked and possible answers scaled on a seven-point Likert-scale which ranges from "considerably less" to "considerably more". The questions referring to the expatriates' flexibility were adjusted to the CEE-context. The measures of *role clarity* (RO\_CLAR) and *role novelty* (RO\_NOV) used items suggested by Stroh, Dennis & Cramer (1994) (e.g., "My tasks [...] are clearly defined", "My job duties are the same as in the home country". Again, respondents had to state their (non-)agreement to these statements on a 7-point-Likert scale ranging from "Do not agree at all" to "Completely agree." The variable *role conflict* (RO\_CON) used items presented by Gupta, Govindarajan & Malhotra (1999). Again using the degree of agreement on a seven-point-Likert-scale, respondents had to evaluate statements referring to possible conflicts (e.g., "I

work with two or more groups that differ regarding their way of doing work"). The constructs of all measures provided a Cronbach's Alpha above 0.70.

### *3.4 Control variables*

This section addresses and discusses the use of control variables. A first control variable used in the study is the age of the expatriate (AGE). For instance, this variable was used by Gupta, Govindarajan & Malhotra (1999) and Selmer (2001) as age can be seen as an indicator for life and work experience. It could be assumed, that the older the expatriates are, the more experience they have collected regarding intercultural cooperation and the easier it is for them to adjust to new work situations. As for AGE the current duration of the assignment (DURATION), i.e., the time the expatriate has already spent in the host country, is argued to be associated with the adjustment on the expatriate. The longer the expatriate has been in host country, the better he/she will be adapted to their circumstances. For the delegation duration, the interviewees should have stated their "present stay duration in the host country" in months (Black & Gregersen 1991; Florkowski & Fogel 1999; Mohr & Klein 2004). The ability to speak the native language of the host country, i.e. foreign language skills (LANGUAGE) is discussed as another major variable that influences the cultural adjustment abroad (e.g., Puck, Kittler & Wright 2008). For feasibility reasons and despite the justified concern that self evaluation of language skills is problematic (e.g., Kittler 2009) the foreign language skills referring to the host countries native language were measured on a seven-point-Likert-scale- from "not at all" to "fluent." The higher the degree of language is, the more the expatriate is likely to adjust. This variable was also used by Selmer (2007) and Wiedemann, Puck & Kittler (2008). Firm size (FIRMSIZE) was also used as a control variable in the study. In a similar form, this was done by Gregersen, Hite & Black (1996), McDonald & Pak Cho Kan (1997) and Harzing & Sorge(2003). Finally, cultural distancev(CULTDIST) - which is argued to be associated with cultural adjustment in various studies - was measured using the index of Kogut & Singh (1988).

## 4. Results and discussion

### 4.1 Descriptive results

This section presents the descriptive results of the study. The expatriates' evaluation of WORK\_ADJ resulted in an average value of 4.723 (SD = 1.264) which indicates that the expatriates on average feel rather well adjusted to their work (see table 1). The correlation analysis reveals that only two dimensions of the work role show a correlation with work adjustment on a statistically significant level. As illustrated in figure 1, the analysis identified a significant positive correlation between RO\_CLAR and WORK\_ADJ (0.299;  $p = 0.05$ ) and a negative association between RO\_CON and WORK\_ADJ (-0.473;  $p = 0.001$ ). Therefore, managers with a clear role definition and less role conflicts tend to be better adjusted to their work on the foreign assignment. In contrast to our expectations, RO\_FLEX and RO\_NOV do not show significant correlations with WORK\_ADJ. Regarding the control variables, a significant positive correlation of the two variables LANGUAGE and FIRMSIZE with WORK\_ADJ is identified. AGE, FIRMSIZE and CULTDIST did not show significant correlations with WORK\_ADJ. The results are documented in table 1.

===

Insert table 1 about here

===

### 4.2 Results of the regression and discussion of the results

In order to test the hypotheses against the data collected, a linear regression analysis was conducted (see table 2). The model explains 33.9 percent of the variance. The explanatory power of the four independent variables is at 23.5 percent. The results for each of the hypotheses are discussed in the following section.

*Hypothesis 1* examines the impact of RO\_FLEX on WORK\_ADJ. The respondents are characterized by a high degree of self-reliance. With 83.6 percent of the respondents, the majority of expatriates perceives autonomy in the workplace higher than in their home country. The self-reliance of their work method increased as a result of the expatriation ( $\bar{x} = 5.97; 1.28$ ). This result supports the findings made by Peterson (2003, p. 65), who observed a high degree of autonomy in regard to the work tasks of the interviewed expatriates in Eastern Europe.

====

Insert table 2 about here

====

According to the results, the RO\_FLEX does not significantly affect WORK\_ADJ. On a non-significant level even a negative impact is identified ( $-0.156; p > 0.1$ ), which is even in contrast to the proposed hypothesis. Therefore, hypothesis 1 is not supported. A possible explanation could be that the flexibility not only allows applying comfortable solutions, but also leads to a higher degree of insecurity, which again might negatively affect work adjustment. The new role in CEE requires more independence in decision-making and flexibility to which the expatriate might not be used to in his present role, because the work routines and decision-making processes were generally associated with rules and regulations in there German working environment in which responsibility tends to be more tightly defined (Laxly & Leymann, 2007). In consequence, the risk and possibly the ‘fear’ of making wrong decisions rises as the expatriates might not be able to consult guidelines or receive advice from a hierarchically superior colleague. This possible explanation is supported by the data of Hofstede (2001) attributing Germans a high degree of uncertainty avoidance.

*Hypothesis 2* shows a positive effect of the RO\_CLAR on WORK\_ADJ. This hypothesis is supported, even if only at a low level of significance ( $0.164; p \leq 0.1$ ). The rather low level of significance could be explained by the characteristic features of the sample. As described above, the respondents on

average were already more than six years in the representative host country at the time of evaluation. It is argued that the requirements of the work role get clearer in the course of the foreign assignment. A sample with expatriates who are not as long in the host country yet might provide a more significant support of the hypothesis.

*Hypothesis 3* assumed a negative impact of RO\_NOV on WORK\_ADJ. This assumption is not supported by the present data. The regression analysis provides no significant result (0.138;  $p > 0.1$ ). This result is in line with previous finding of Black (1988), however, it is contradictory to the results of many other studies. As previously discussed in this paper, existing studies do not provide consensus about the direction of the impact of RO\_NOV on WORK-ADJ, nor on the significance of the impact assumed. Thus, the result for RO\_NOV is not surprising. However, the absence of significance could be a result of the specific characteristics of the sample, again. As for hypothesis 2, the average time spent abroad of more than six years might explain the result. The fact that the work role in the CEE is not perceived as “new” or “different” after certain duration of stay seems plausible. From a methodological point this average duration also raises the question, to what extent comparisons between the current job in the CEE host country and the preceding position in Germany are still valid. A sample with expatriates who had on average spent less time abroad might provide different results.

*Hypothesis 4* implies that a negative impact of RO\_CON on WORK\_ADJ. The regression model confirms this assumption on a highly significant level (-0.389,  $p < 0.001$ ). Within his work role in CEE, the expatriate operates between two stakeholders – the German parent company as well as various host country stakeholders such as authorities and employees. These stakeholders do not only have generic different views than the parent but might also have culturally different expectations, which can foster conflict situations. Within these conflicting situations, the expatriate must find a balance between these differing expectations and requirements. For the case of the present sample, the degree of role conflicts is not assessed as very high, however when they are present, they have strong negative

effects on the adjustment process. The conflict situations complicate the expatriates' work and consequently affect their adjustment to the work in the CEE-context.

## **5. Conclusion and implications for future research**

The purpose of the paper was to empirically examine the impact of the work role on work adjustment on foreign assignments. The empirical part of the paper provided quantitative data of 115 Germans expatriates on assignments in the CEE-countries Poland, Romania, Russia, Hungary, and the Czech Republic. As discussed in detail in the introductory part of this paper, this country focus intends to close a research gap of practical as well as theoretical significance. As a major part of previous research in this field is related to expatriates from the U. S. (and to a lesser degree foreign expatriates within the U.S.), it was argued that the question has to be raised as whether, and to what extent, previous empirical results are transferable to the specific Central and Eastern European context. Based on previous study and under consideration of the CEE-context four hypotheses were derived relating to the impact of the work role dimensions role flexibility, role clarity, role novelty and role conflict on the expatriate's degree of work adjustment. The findings of the quantitative study provide highly statistical significant support of the detrimental effects of role conflicts on work adjustment. Furthermore, a significant positive impact of could be found for role clarity. No statistically significant support was found for the assumed impact of role flexibility and role novelty on work adjustment which challenges prevailing theoretical perspectives on the relationship between work role and adjustment.

Despite the contribution of the study which lies in closing a region-specific gap by providing empirical findings on the relationship of the work-role and the work dimension of cultural adjustment in CEE-countries, a number of limitations has to be kept in mind when interpreting the findings. First, the study takes a static, not a dynamic look on adjustment. As mentioned in the discussion above, the sample showed a very high average time the expatriates have already spent on their assignment in

CEE-countries which is higher than the regular average of assignments in general (Welge/Holtbrügge 2006, p. 224) and consequently might limit the representativeness of the sample as well as distort the interpretation of the results. Furthermore, it could be discussed, whether the countries included in the sample provide a representative set of the CEE-region as a whole. Another issue that could be addressed is the country scope of the expatriates. The results for German expatriates in CEE might not be transferable to U.S. or Asian or even other European expatriates in this region. However, for feasibility reasons and in order to avoid distortion caused by cultural heterogeneity of the expatriate sample, the focus on expatriates from one country seems justified.

The limitations of this study provide implication for future research. In addition to the need for longitudinal or more comprehensive studies which provide data on all CEE-countries, more precise information on single CEE countries might provide additional insight into the relationship between work role and work adjustment in the CEE-region. As the development of the CEE-countries is subject to a very dynamic transformation process during the last two decades, differences between the CEE-countries need to be taken into account.

The study also provides implications for business practitioners. Overall, the study sheds light onto the work dimension of cultural adjustment and the impact of the work role in a CEE-context. The results – particularly the highly significant impact of role conflict - indicate that companies sending managers on assignments in CEE-countries have to be particularly aware of potential conflicts that could arise between their own strategic objectives and those of the local stakeholders abroad. In the very likely case that potential conflicts can't be avoided, companies might be well advised to provide training measures on how to solve role conflicts in their pre-departure trainings. Furthermore, they could pay particular attention to the development of potential conflicts in the course of the assignment.

## References

- Andreason, A.W. (2003) Expatriate Adjustment to Foreign Assignments. *International Journal of Commerce and Management*, 13/1, 42-60.
- Banai, M., & Reisel, W.D. (1993) Expatriate Managers' Loyalty to the MNC: Myth or Reality? An Exploratory Study. *Journal of International Business Studies*, 24/2, 233- 248.
- Bell, M.P., & Harrison, D.A. (1996) Using Intra-National Diversity for International Assignments: A Model of Bicultural Competence and Expatriate Adjustment. *Human Resource Management Review*, 6/1, 47-74.
- Birdseye, M.G., & Hill, J.S. (1995) Individual, Organizational/Work and Environmental Influences on Expatriate Turnover Tendencies: An Empirical Study. *Journal of International Business Studies*, 26/4, 787-813.
- Black, J. S. (1988) Work Role Transitions: A Study of American Expatriate Managers in Japan. *Journal of International Business Studies*, 19/2, 277-294.
- Black, J.S. (1990) *Factors Related to the Adjustment of Japanese Expatriate Managers in America. Research in Personnel and Human Resources Management: 109-125*. Greenwich/London: JAI Press.
- Black, J.S., & Gregersen, H.B. (1991) Antecedents to Cross-Cultural Adjustment for Expatriates in Pacific Rim Assignments. *Human Resources*, 44/5: 497-515.
- Black, J.S., & Stephens, G.K. (1989) The Influence of the Spouse on American Expatriate Adjustment and Intent to Stay in Pacific Rim Overseas Assignments. *Journal of Management*, 15/4, 529-544.
- Black, J.S., Mendenhall, M., & Oddou, G. (1991) Toward a Comprehensive Model of International Adjustment: An Integration of Multiple Theoretical Perspectives. *Academy of Management Review*, 16/2, 291-317.

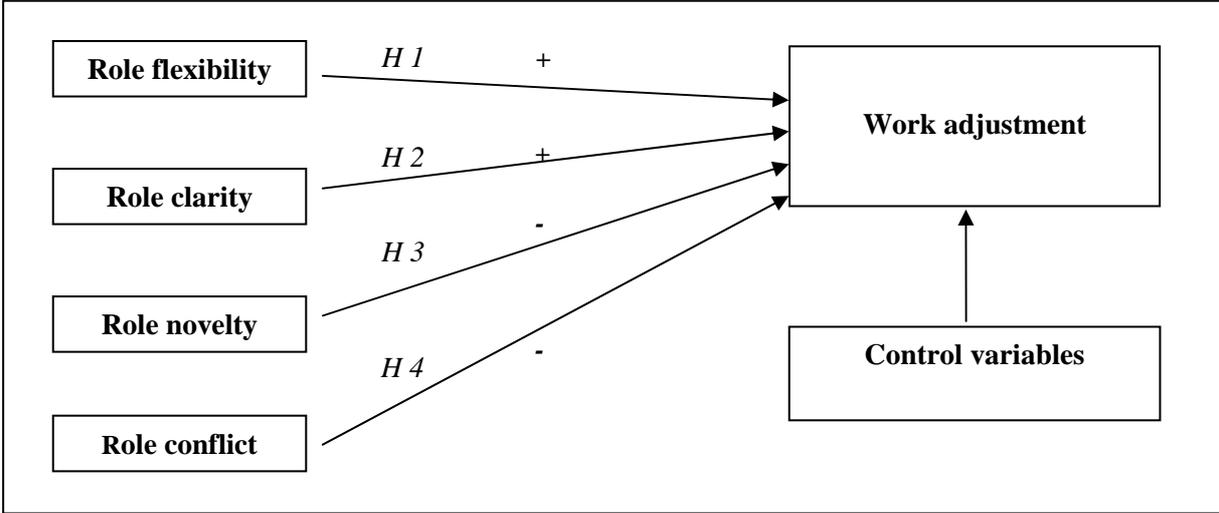
- Breiden, O., Mohr, A.T., & Mirza, H.R. (2006) An Empirical Test of a Correspondence Model of Expatriate Managers' Work Adjustment. *International Journal of Human Resource Management*, 17/11, 1907-1925.
- Brett, J.M. (1980) The Effect of Job Transfer on Employees and Their Families. In C.L. Cooper, & S. Payne (Eds), *Current Concerns in Occupational Stress*: 99-136. Chister.
- Caligiuri, P., & Lazarova, M. (2002) A Model for the Influence of Social Interaction and Social Support on Female Expatriates' Cross-Cultural Adjustment. *International Journal of Human Resource Management*, 13/5, 761-772.
- Davis, G.F. (1991) Agents Without Principles? The Spread of the Poison Pill Through the Intercorporate Network. *Administrative Science Quarterly*, 36/4, 583-613.
- Davis, G.F., & Greve, H.R. (1997) Corporate Elite Networks and Governance Changes in the 1980s. *American Journal of Sociology*, 103/1, 1-37.
- Feldman, D.C., & Tompson, H.B. (1993) Expatriation, Repatriation, and Domestic Geographical Relocation: An Empirical Investigation of Adjustment to New Job Assignments. *Journal of International Business Studies*, 24/3, 507-529.
- Florkowski, G.W., & Fogel, D.S. (1999) Expatriate Adjustment and Commitment: the Role of Host-Unit Treatment. *International Journal of Human Resource Management*, 10/5, 783-807.
- Gorzka, G. (2004) Wohin steuert Russland unter Putin. In G. Gorzka & P.W. Schulze (Eds), *Wohin steuert Russland unter Putin. Der autoritäre Weg in die Demokratie*: 7-17. Frankfurt/Main.
- Gregersen, H.B., Hite, J.M., & Black, J.S. (1996) Expatriate Performance Appraisal in U.S. Multinational Firms. *Journal of International Business Studies*, 27/4, 711-738.
- Gupta, A.K., Govindarajan, V., & Malhotra, A. (1999) Feedback-Seeking Behavior Within Multinational Corporations. *Strategic Management Journal*, 20/3, 205-222.
- Hauler, D. (2005) *Internationalisierungsstrategien deutscher Unternehmen in Osteuropa. Eine empirische Untersuchung am Beispiel der Nahrungs- und Genussmittelindustrie*. Hamburg: Dr. Kovac.

- Harzing, A.-W., & Sorge, A. (2003) The Relative Impact of Country of Origin and Universal Contingencies on Internationalization Strategies and Corporate Control in Multinational Enterprises: Worldwide and European Perspectives. *Organization Studies*, 24/2, 187-214.
- Heenan, D.A., & Pelmutter, H.V. (1979) *Multinational Organization Development*. Reading, MA: Addison-Wesley.
- Hennart, J.-F., & Park, Y.-R. (1994) Location, Governance and Strategic Determinants of Japanese Manufacturing Investment in the United States. *Strategic Management Journal*, 15/6, 419-436.
- Hofstede, G. (2001) Culture's Consequences. *Comparing Values, Behaviors, Institutions and Organizations Across Nations*. 2nd Edition. Thousand Oaks: Sage.
- Holtbrügge, D. (1995) *Personalmanagement multinationaler Unternehmungen in Osteuropa*. Wiesbaden: Gabler.
- Jarillo, J.C., & Martinez, J.I. (1990) Different Roles for Subsidiaries: the Case of Multinational Corporations in Spain. *Strategic Management Journal*, 11/7, 501-512.
- Kittler, M. (2009) *Understanding Misunderstanding in Intercultural Communication*. Munich: Hampp.
- Kogut, B., & Singh, H. (1988) The Effect of National Culture on the Choice of Entry Mode. *Journal of International Business Studies*, 19/3, 411-432.
- Krenn, S. (2006) *Imitation von Auslandsmarkteintritten. Eine empirische Analyse anhand der Markteintritte deutscher Unternehmen in Mittel- und Osteuropa*. Wiesbaden: Gabler.
- Lasch, I., & Leymann, A. (2007) *Der Tanz mit dem russischen Bären. Strategien für langfristigen Erfolg in Russland*. Heidelberg: Redline.
- Lii, S.-Y., & Wong, S.-Y. (2008) The Antecedents of Overseas Adjustment and Commitment of Expatriates. *International Journal of Human Resource Management*, 19/2, 296-313.
- McDonald, G.M., & Pak, C.K. (1997) Ethical Perceptions of Expatriate and Local Managers in Hong Kong. *Journal of Business Ethics*, 16/15, 1605-1623.

- McEvoy, G.E., & Parker, B. (1995) Expatriate Adjustment: Causes and Consequences. In J. Selmer (Ed.) *Expatriate Management: New Ideas for International Business*: 97-114. Westport: Quorum Books.
- Meffert, H. (2004) Strategien für den Markteintritt und die Marktbearbeitung in Osteuropa aus Sicht der Wissenschaft. In H. Meffert, K. Backhaus, & J. Becker (Eds): *Strategien für den Markteintritt und die Marktbearbeitung in Osteuropa*. Dokumentation des 45. Münsteraner Führungsgesprächs vom 22./23. Oktober 2003, Dokumentationspapier Nr. 170: 1-9, Münster.
- Mohr, A.T., & Klein, S. (2004) Exploring the Adjustment of American Expatriate Spouses in Germany. *International Journal of Human Resource Management*, 15/7, 1189-1206.
- Morley, M., Burke, C., & O'Regan, T. (1997) The Irish in Moscow: A Question of Adjustment. *Human Resource Management Journal*, 7/3, 53-66.
- Morley, M., Burke, C., & Finn, G. (1999) Irish Expatriates in Moscow: Exploratory Evidence on Aspects of Adjustment. In C. Brewster, & H. Harris (Eds): *International HRM: Contemporary Issues in Europe*: 203-223. London: Routledge.
- Morley, M., & Flynn, M. (2003) The Relationship Between Work-Role Characteristics and Intercultural Transitional Adjustment Domain Patterns Among a Sample of US and Canadian Expatriates on Assignment in Ireland. *Cross Cultural Management*, 10/3, 42-58.
- Peterson, R.B. (2003) The Use of Expatriates and Inpatriates in Central and Eastern Europe Since the Wall Came Down. *Journal of World Business*, 38/1, 55-69.
- Pinder, C.C., & Schroeder, K.G. (1987) Time to Proficiency Following Job Transfers. *Academy of Management Journal*, 30/2, 336-353.
- PriceWaterhouseCoopers (2005) International Assignments. Global Policy and Practice. Key Trends 2005, Aug. 2005, [http://www.pwc.com/uk/eng/inssol/publ/pwc\\_assignment-keytrends2005.pdf](http://www.pwc.com/uk/eng/inssol/publ/pwc_assignment-keytrends2005.pdf). Accessed 14 December 2008
- Puck J., Kittler, M., & Wright C. (2008) Does it really work? Re-assessing the impact of pre-departure cross-cultural training on expatriate adjustment. *International Journal of Human Resource Management*, 19/12, 2182-2197.

- Römer, M.A. (2007) Offshoring – Wieviele Jobs gehen ins Ausland? - <http://www.ifh.wiwi.uni-goettingen.de/pr%C3%A4sentation/Pr%C3%A4sentation%20Christof%20R%C3%B6mer.Pdf>. Accessed 15 October 2008.
- Schmid, S., Kutschker, M. (2003) Rollentypologien für ausländische Tochtergesellschaften in Multinationalen Unternehmungen. In D. Holtbrügge (Ed.), *Management Multinationaler Unternehmungen*: 161-182. Heidelberg: Springer.
- Selmer, J. (2001) Expatriate Selection: Back to Basics? *International Journal of Human Resource Management*, 12/8, 1219-1233.
- Selmer, J. (2007) Language Ability and Adjustment: Western Expatriates in China. *Thunderbird International Business Review*, 48/3, 347-368.
- Shaffer, M.A., Harrison, D.A., & Gilley, K.M. (1999) Dimensions, Determinants, and Differences in the Expatriate Adjustment Process. *Journal of International Business Studies*, 30/3; 557-572.
- Stroh, L.K., Dennis, L.E., & Cramer, T.C. (1994) Predictors of Expatriate Adjustment. *The International Journal of Organizational Analysis*, 2/2, 176-192.
- Suutari, V., & Riusala, K. (1998) Managing Business Operations in Central and Eastern Europe: Problems Faced by Western Expatriate Managers, Academy of Business & Administrative Sciences, Working Paper, Budapest: <http://www.sba.muohio.edu/ABAS/1998/abasceertf.pdf>, Accessed 15 October 2008.
- Welge, M.K., & Holtbrügge, D. (2006) *Internationales Management. Theorien, Funktionen, Fallstudien*, Stuttgart: Schäffer-Poeschel.
- Wiedemann, K., Puck, J.F., & Kittler, M.G. (2008) Einflussfaktoren auf die Relevanz von Sprachkenntnissen im Rahmen der kulturellen Anpassung von Auslandsentsandten. In Holtbrügge, D. (Ed.), *Cultural Adjustment of Expatriates. Theoretical Concepts and Empirical Studies*: 145-163. München-Mering: Hampp.
- Wittenberg, R. (1998) *Grundlagen computerunterstützter Datenanalyse*. Stuttgart: Lucius & Lucius
- Yoosefi, T., & Thomas, A. (2003) *Beruflich in Russland. Trainingsprogramm für Manager, Fach- und Führungskräfte*. Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht.

Fig. 1: Research model and hypotheses



*Tab. 1: Descriptive statistics and correlations*

	Average	SD	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
1 Work adjustment	4,723	1,264	-								
2 Role flexibility	5,974	1,280	-,064	-							
3 Role clarity	5,565	1,464	,299**	-,106	-						
4 Role novelty	4,704	1,854	-,032	,274**	-,132	-					
5 Role conflicts	3,378	1,312	-,473***	-,067	-,356***	,157	-				
6 Age	41.20	8.89	-,056	,017	,165 †	-,212*	-,103	-			
7 Duration (Length of stay)	73.85	157.69	,125	-,019	,070	-,085	-,047	,130	--		
8 Language skills	3,626	2,206	,303**	,201*	,061	-,160 †	-,239*	,036	,148	-	
9 Firm size	4,509	0,865	,208*	-,028	-,004	,178 †	,122	-,163 †	,090	-,140	-
10 Cultural distance	1,675	1,253	,095	-,065	,196 †	,025	-,155	,096	,125	,438***	-,097

Remarks † p <0.1; \* p <0.05; \*\* p <0.01; \*\*\* p <0.001; n = 115

Table 2: Regression model

	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3
<i>Independently variables</i>			
Role flexibility		-0,150	-0,156
Role clarity		0,156 †	0,164 †
Role novelty		0,096	0,138
Role conflict		-0,443 ***	-0,389 ***
<i>Control variables</i>			
Age	-0,041		-0,039
Duration (Length of stay)	0,062		0,028
Language skills	0,322 **		0,312 **
Firm size	0,228*		0,245*
Cultural distance	-0,107		-0,190
R <sup>2</sup>	0,157	0,264	0,388
Corrected R <sup>2</sup>	0,125	0,235	0,339
F-value	4,968 **	9,302 ***	7,860 ***

Remarks † p <0.1; \* p <0.05; \*\* p <0.01; \*\*\* p <0.001; n = 115