NATURE AND OUTCOMES OF SELF-INITIATED EXPATRIATES' PSYCHOLOGICAL CONTRACTS

Abstract: In this study we identify a variety of employment relationships among self-initiated expatriates and examine their respective influences on different employee outcomes. We do so in two steps. First, using the concept of psychological contract we examine how self-initiated expatriates perceive the obligations of their employers towards them as well as the fulfillment of these obligations. We conduct a cluster analysis and identify four types of expatriates differentiated by their perceptions of (a) the obligations promised to them by their employers; and (b) the fulfillment of these obligations. Second, we validate the established clusters by examining and comparing the levels of cross-cultural adjustment, intentions to exit, loyalty, voice, and neglect (the four variables comprising the EVLN framework) among expatriates in each cluster. Based on these analyses we conclude with a set of propositions.

Keywords: self-initiated expatriates; psychological contract; cross-cultural adjustment; EVLN framework

INTRODUCTION

Expatriation remains an important aspect of doing business globally. At the same time, the nature of expatriation seems to be changing as various alternative types of international assignments and expatriates emerge and become widespread (Collings, Scullion and Morley, 2007). One alternative type of expatriates which has been steadily gaining attention and in numbers since the 1990s is self-initiated expatriates (SIE). SIEs contribute substantially to the nature of expatriation. Whilst the traditional view suggests that the organization is able to ensure an expatriate's commitment through various benefits that the expatriate receives from it, SIEs differ substantially from traditional organizationally-assigned expatriates (AE) in terms of what motivates them to go abroad and stay loyal to the organization (Jokinen, Brewster and Suutari, 2008). In contrast to AEs, SIEs tend to take more responsibility for their own expatriation experiences and career implications, engage more extensively in career self-management, and focus more on their subjective career satisfaction rather than career development in terms of promotions and salary levels (Doherty, 2013).

All this has implications for how SIEs build and perceive their employment relationships. From the organizational side, it has implications for how SIEs can be managed in an effective way. Yet, despite these developments, research addressing the nature of employment relationship among

expatriates in general has been rare and among SIEs nonexistent (Bhaskar-Shrinivas et al., 2005; Doherty, 2013). This is unfortunate considering the growing importance of SIEs for economies and organizations globally (Dickmann and Baruch, 2011).

Against this background, in this paper we attempt to shed some light on employment relationships of SIEs. We do so by applying the concept of psychological contract (PC) to understand SIEs' expectations, attitudes, and behaviors in their employment relationships with their employers. More specifically, in this paper we do two things. First, we use the concept of PC to examine how SIEs perceive the obligations of their employers towards them as well as the fulfillment of these obligations. We conduct a cluster analysis and identify four types of SIEs differentiated by their perceptions of (a) the obligations promised to them by their employers; and (b) the fulfillment of these obligations. Second, we validate the established clusters by examining and comparing the level of cross-cultural adjustment, intentions to exit, loyalty, voice, and neglect (the four variables comprise the EVLN framework) among SIEs in each cluster.

Overall, this study is but one of the first attempts to map the types of PC found among SIEs and to examine their relationships with important SIEs' outcomes. In the end, our exploratory analysis concludes with a number of propositions that remain to be tested in future research. Finally, this study is also an attempt to address the recent call for more research using PC theory to link expatriates' adjustment, their attitudes and behaviors as well as career success (see Haslberger and Brewster, 2009).

THEORETICAL BACKGROUND

Self-initiated expatriation

Whereas until relatively recently expatriation research has predominantly focused on AEs, i.e., employees assigned to go overseas for a defined period of time within the organization, since the 1990s alternative forms of international assignments started to gain increasing attention, such as short-term, international frequent flyer, etc. (Collings et al., 2007). Additionally, the number of SIEs started to increase globally. SIEs are defined as internationally mobile individuals who relocate voluntarily to

a foreign country without organizational assistance and are hired under a local host-country contract (Inkson et al., 1997; Al Ariss and Crowley-Henry, 2013).

The phenomenon of SIEs is an important one because these people are valuable international human resources that both organizations and economies can benefit from (Dickmann and Baruch, 2011). Due to their nature, SIEs cost less than traditional corporate expatriates for organizations in terms of travel, living costs, and salaries. Potentially they are able to bring entrepreneurial skills, proactivity, flexibility, and alternative views of the world into organizations (Doherty, 2013). Yet, research has highlighted significant differences that exist between AEs and SIEs in terms of motivations to undertake an international assignment and career aspirations (Jokinen et al., 2008; Biemann and Andresen, 2010; Doherty, Dickmann and Mills, 2011).

In general, SIEs tend to have a broader set of motivations than AEs to relocate abroad. Moreover, the heterogeneity among SIEs, also in terms of their motivations to relocate, has been noted in the literature (Suutari and Brewster, 2000; Al Ariss and Syed, 2011). Their motivations were shown to be related to a relatively wide range of issues such as financial, personal, family, search for adventure, and career advancement (Inkson and Myers, 2003; Carr et al., 2005). Oftentimes, SIEs are motivated by their desire to improve one's lifestyle and quality of living or by their interest to learn about a specific cultural setting and find new international contacts (Myers and Pringle, 2005). SIEs accumulate and use career capital to pursue a more subjective career success than AEs, which is reflected in SIEs' dominant career anchors (Crowley-Henry, 2007). Also, their subjective career success is more strongly than in the case of AEs connected to their feelings of job satisfaction and work-life balance. As compared to AEs, SIEs appreciate work-life balance more than power, prestige, money and career progress in their careers (Inkson, 2008; Tharenou, 2010).

Considering the heterogeneity of SIEs and their increasing role and importance for the global economy, it is crucial for organizations to understand the nature of SIEs. The rising number of SIEs among expatriates globally implies that the nature of expatriate employment relationship is also changing. SIEs are likely to perceive their obligations towards their employers as well as the

obligations of their employers towards them differently than AEs (Pate and Scullion, 2010; Doherty, 2013). It certainly creates challenges for managing SIEs.

Whereas historically expatriates (mostly AEs) were managed through the provision of enhanced rewards packages and promised career acceleration (Holt and Wigginton, 2002), SIEs are more likely to seek to utilize and build their skill sets and networks through a variety of assignments and business contexts, which often cannot - and even not meant to - be achieved by working in one organization (Bolino and Feldman, 2000). SIEs are more likely than AEs to take responsibility for their own expatriation experience and the career implications, more extensively engaging in career self-management, making SIEs more protean in their career orientation (Mayrhofer et al., 2008). Subjective career satisfaction seems to be a stronger motivator for SIEs than career development in terms of promotion and salary level making their career experience distinct from that of AEs (Doherty, 2013). Thus, there is a need to understand better how SIEs' career orientations and motivations affect their relationship with employers. To examine the nature of expatriate employment relationship in case of SIEs we now turn to discuss the concept of PC, which is concerned with expatriates' and employers' perceptions of the other party's obligations and their fulfilment (Coyle-Shapiro and Kessler, 2000; de Vos et al., 2003).

Psychological contract literature

PC has proven a valuable construct to examine employment relationships (Rousseau, 1995; Guest and Conway, 2002). It is defined as "an exchange agreement of promises and contributions between two parties, an employer and an employee" (Janssens et al., 2003). It is concerned with employees' and employers' perceptions of the other party's obligations as well as their fulfillment (Rousseau and Tijoriwala, 1998; Coyle-Shapiro and Kessler, 2000; Coyle-Shapiro, 2002).

Early on, PC research has distinguished between two types of contracts: transactional and relational (Rousseau, 1989, 1995). The transactional PC includes short-term and narrowly focused economic or monetary exchanges that take place between an employer and an employee. It assumes rational and self-interested parties and no on-going interdependence between them. The relational PC

then refers to open-ended socio-emotional obligations, such as trust and good faith. It includes mutual investments from which withdrawal is difficult and a commitment to the other party that promotes interdependence. Later, research has suggested a third distinct type of PC, which focuses on an employer's obligations associated with an employee's training, development, and future opportunities (e.g. Coyle-Shapiro and Kessler 2000). The emergence of this type of PC reflects the growing importance that employees globally assign to continuous professional development in their career success.

Research shows that from the employee's point of view a functional PC requires ongoing fulfillment of obligations by the employer. A failure to do so, a so-called PC breach, has a number of negative consequences for the employer, such as reduced performance, commitment, and satisfaction (Bal et al., 2008; Zhao et al., 2007). A construct of PC breach was proposed to denote a cognitive recognition of a discrepancy between what was promised and what was received (Morrison and Robinson, 1997). This discrepancy, which leads to breach, can take the form of under- or over-fulfillment (Lambert et al., 2003). Interestingly, it was found that employees react differently to breaches of different types of PC. Whereas they respond negatively to under- or over-fulfillment of relational PCs, they react only negatively to under-fulfillment of transactional PCs (Montes and Irving, 2008).

More generally, several theoretical lenses were suggested to explain how PC beliefs translate into employee attitudes and behaviors. For instance, social exchange theory argues that in an employment relationship employees will ensure equity by engaging in negative behaviors if they receive less than they should and positive behaviors if they receive more (Rousseau, 1995). In support, PC breach was found to be associated with a range of negative outcomes, such as turnover and neglect (Turnley and Feldman, 1999), and a range of positive outcomes, such as employee performance (Robinson, 1996), organizational citizenship behavior (Coyle-Shapiro and Kessler, 2000), and organizational commitment (Guzzo et al., 1994). Later, however, research showed that these processes are more complex and are influenced by a number of situational factors (Turnley and Feldman, 1999), such as for instance concerns about an employee's longer term social relationship with the

organization (Restubog et al., 2008), the availability of attractive alternative employment options (Turnley and Feldman, 1999), or the perception whether the breach is justifiable (Robinson and Morrison, 2000). It was also noted that not every instance of perceived PC breach by the employer result in a negative response from the employee (Zhao et al., 2007). This indicates that the current PC literature may still have unaccounted for certain situational factors or employee characteristics that can explain why certain instances of PC breach do not lead to negative responses.

Psychological contract of expatriates

Research on PC of expatriates in general is rather limited and even more so in the case of SIEs (Hechanova, Beehr and Christeansen, 2003; Bhaskar-Shrinivas, Shaffer and Luk, 2005). Up to now, there have been only a few exceptions. In their pioneering study, Guzzo et al. (1994) pointed out through a quantitative analysis that PCs of expatriates are predominantly of relational type with strong mutual affective commitment and PC fulfillment has positive impact on expatriates' work attitudes.

In contrast, more recently, Pate and Scullion (2010) highlighted the changing nature of traditional expatriates' PCs to reflect expatriates' strive to ensure their employability and reduce their dependence on a single organization. Based on interviews with 12 expatriates in three case organizations the authors conclude that on both sides the PCs between expatriates and their employers were increasingly seen as of transactional type. The shift was attributed to a stronger inclination of the employers to precisely fix the length and the key terms and conditions of the contract.

Finally, Chen (2010) found that expatriates' perceptions of organizational justice and social exchange had positive influences on their perceptions of their PC fulfillment but the perception of the PC fulfillment had no impact on their cross-cultural adjustment. Thus, the research on expatriates' PC has up to now been not very extensive and, what's more, none of the extant studies actually looked at PCs of SIEs.

The relative lack of attention to expatriates' PC is surprising considering the importance of PC for expatriate assignments (Haslberger and Brewster, 2009; Pate and Scullion, 2010). Relocation to a host environment triggers significant changes in one's entire life and entails a movement, often with a

family, to another country. It is associated with a large number of risks and vulnerabilities. Hence, what distinguishes an expatriate PC from other forms of employment is its scope, that is, the fact that it potentially has a significant impact on all aspects of an expatriate's life.

Thus, based on the above, our goal in this paper is twofold. First, we use PC concept to examine how SIEs perceive the obligations of their employers towards them as well as the fulfillment of these obligations. We conduct a cluster analysis and identify four types of SIEs differentiated by their perceptions of (a) the obligations promised to them by their employers; and (b) the fulfillment of these obligations. Second, we validate the established clusters by examining and comparing the level of cross-cultural adjustment, intentions to exit, loyalty, voice, and neglect (the four variables comprise the EVLN framework) among SIEs in each cluster. In this way, we also address the recent call for more research using PC theory to link adjustment, expatriate attitudes and behaviors as well as career success (see Haslberger and Brewster, 2009).

We have chosen cross-cultural adjustment as a variable to validate our clusters because it has drawn a lot of attention in expatriation research (see Bhaskar-Shrinivas et al., 2005), where it is claimed to be one of the key challenges and key indicators of success for expatriates on international assignment (Aycan, 1997; Caligiuri, 2000). It is defined as the degree of an expatriate's psychological comfort in a new cultural and work-related environment (e.g. Black & Stephens, 1989). It is conceptualized as comprising three dimensions: general living, interactional, and work adjustments (e.g., Bhaskar-Shrinivas et al., 2005; Shaffer, et al., 1999).

We have also chosen the EVLN framework because it is a widely accepted framework to examine how an employee reacts and behaves in response to different aspects of the organization (Hirschman, 1970; Rusbult et al., 1988; Si and Li, 2012). It has been specifically used to understand employees' reactions to PC breach (Turnley and Feldman, 1999; Si, Wei and Li, 2008). The framework comprises (a) *exit* defined as an intention to leave an organization by quitting, searching for a new job, or thinking about quitting; (b) *voice* defined as attempts to improve conditions in an organization by discussing problems with a superior or co-workers, suggesting solutions, seeking help

from an outside agency, or whistle-blowing: (c) *loyalty* defined as the readiness to wait and hope for conditions to improve while giving public and private support to the organization; and (d) *neglect* which refers to allowing conditions to deteriorate through reduced interest or effort, chronic lateness or absences, the use of working time for personal business, or increased error rate.

METHODS

Sample

Participants in this study were expatriates who have participated in a MOOC program offered by a renowned public doctoral degree-granting higher education establishment based in France. A bilingual online survey (in French and in English) was sent to the targeted expatriates after they have completed the MOOC.

To develop the survey we followed several procedures. When available in published academic sources in French, we adopted the French versions of the scales from the literature. Otherwise, the constructs were translated from English into French and then back-translated into English by two independent French native management researchers. We identified our target sample of self-initiated expatriates using the following criteria: (1) respondents had worked outside of their home country; (2) respondents were professionals (excluding students, unemployed and academics); (3) respondents were expatriated for less than 10 years (i.e., they are not migrants/skilled migrants (see Al Ariss and Crowley-Henry [2013] for the distinction)); 4) respondents were SIEs, i.e., they moved to another country for work without the support of an organization in their home country (Doherty et al., 2011).

Altogether 299 online questionnaires were received. We cannot estimate the exact response rate since we did not have the information about the total number of SIEs among the total population of the MOOC students. Excluding observations with irrelevant responses and missing values, our final sample consisted of 242 SIEs. The average age was 38.85 years, 55% were female. 25% expatriated alone, 21% with their spouse, 48% with their spouse and children, and 6% with their children only. 74% had prior experience in expatriation, the average experience abroad was 8.63 years and the average length spent in the host country was 4.65 years (with a minimum of 1 month and a maximum

of 10 years). The average tenure in the company was 4.07 years and the average tenure in the position was 3.69 years.

Measures

Psychological contract breach. PC breach has been measured in several different ways in previous research (Restubog et al., 2008). In this paper we employ one of the most widely accepted and used measures - a composite evaluative measure, which takes into account what obligations have been promised (both implicitly and explicitly) and the extent to which the employer has fulfilled these promises (e.g., Coyle-Shapiro and Kessler, 2000; Turnley et al., 2003; McDermott et al., 2013). The advantage of using this particular measure is that it allows considering both the nature (i.e. relational, training and transactional) and the magnitude of the promised obligations and their fulfillment.

Specifically, we used an 11 item scale adopted from Coyle-Shapiro and Kessler (2000), which differentiates between three PC dimensions: relational (three items, e.g. "*Good career prospects*"), training (three items, e.g. "*The necessary training to do my job well*"), and transactional (five items, e.g., "*Pay increases to maintain my standard of living*"). Respondents were asked to indicate the extent to which (a) they believe that their employer is obligated to deliver each of the 11 items (perceived PC obligations) and (b) these items have been delivered by the employer in practice (perceived PC fulfillment). Responses were measured using a 5-point Likert scale ranging from '1' ('not at all') to '5' ('to a great extent').

Cronbach's alphas for the employer's perceived obligations and fulfillment of the three PC dimensions were as follows: perceived training obligations ($\alpha = 0.74$); perceived relational obligations ($\alpha = 0.77$); perceived transactional obligations ($\alpha = 0.68$); perceived fulfilment of training obligations ($\alpha = 0.86$); perceived fulfilment of relational obligations ($\alpha = 0.79$); and perceived fulfilment of transactional obligations ($\alpha = 0.70$).

Outcome variables.

We used several outcome variables, namely cross-cultural adjustment and the EVLN framework (exit, voice, loyalty, and neglect) to validate the clusters established in the analysis (see Ketchen and Shook, 1996). The goal of validation is to ensure that a cluster solution has external validity and is useful for the prediction of important outcomes. In line with previous research (Janssens et al., 2003; McDermott et al., 2013), validation involves examining how different clusters relate to a theoretically relevant external (i.e. not used in defining clusters) variable. In our case, these were cross-cultural adjustment, exit, voice, loyalty, and neglect.

Cross-cultural adjustment. We used Black and Stephens's scale (1989) to measure cross-cultural adjustment. The measure comprises 14 items measured on a Likert scale ranging from 1 for "*very unadjusted*" to 5 for "*perfectly adjusted*". It consists of three dimensions and the three-dimensional structure has previously been tested and validated in the literature (e.g. Black et al., 1991; Shaffer et al., 1999; Kraimer et al., 2001): general living adjustment (seven items, e.g. cost of living); interactional adjustment (four items, e.g. interacting with host nationals outside of work), and work adjustment (three items, e.g. performance standards and expectations). Cronbach's alphas for all three dimensions were satisfactory: general living ($\alpha = 0.86$), interactional ($\alpha = 0.93$), and work ($\alpha = 0.91$).

EVNL framework. All measures below utilized a five-point Likert scale (1-*strongly disagree*; 5-*strongly agree*). We used Rusbult's scale (1988) to measure Exit. The measure comprises four items, such as "*During the next year I will probably look for a new job outside this company*". To measure voice, we used Liang, Farh & Farh's scale (2012) composed of two dimensions: promotive voice (five items, e.g., "*I raise suggestions to improve the unit's working procedure*") and prohibitive voice (five items, e.g., "*I dare to voice out opinions on things that might affect efficiency in the work unit, even if that would embarrass others*"). We used Van Dyne et al.'s scale (1994) to measure loyalty. The measure comprises three items, such as "*I represent this organization favorably to outsiders*". At last, we used the scale of Hagedoorn et al (1999) to measure loyalty. The measure is composed of five items, such as "*I put less effort into your work than may be expected of me*". Cronbach's alphas for these constructs are as follows: exit ($\alpha = 0.86$), promotive voice ($\alpha = 0.94$), prohibitive voice ($\alpha = 0.79$), loyalty ($\alpha = 0.69$), and neglect ($\alpha = 0.81$).

Assessment of common method bias

We took several measures to ensure that common method bias would not be a problem in our analysis (Chang et al., 2010). All respondents were asked to be honest and sincere in their responses to ensure data precision. They were ensured that the online questionnaire was anonymous and totally independent from the MOOC program. We also used statistical techniques to determine whether our data analysis is likely to suffer from common method bias.

First, we performed Harman's one factor test (Podsakoff & Organ, 1986) by including all items of all the constructs involved in the cluster analysis and its description (employer's obligations and fulfilment, cross-cultural adjustment, exit, voice, loyalty, and neglect) into an exploratory analysis. The analysis clearly showed eight factors with Eigenvalues greater than one and the first factor accounted for 18 percent of the total variance. Thus, there was no evidence of unidimensionality in our data.

Second, we followed Podsakoff et al.'s (2003) approach to control for an unmeasured latent factor. We performed a confirmatory factor analysis where we let the items load on both their theoretical constructs and on a latent common method variance factor. All item loadings were still significant after the inclusion of the latent factor, thus we can conclude that common method bias is not a serious threat for the interpretation of the following analyses.

Empirical strategy

Our empirical strategy follows the approach in McDermott et al. (2013) and Janssens et al. (2003). In order to identify distinct types of PCs in the context of SIEs, we adopted an inductive research design and developed an empirical taxonomy. The empirical procedure involved two steps. First, we conducted a factor analysis on the two sets of attributes of a PC defined above: the perceived employer's obligations and their fulfilments. We used the first four factors (covering 87% of the total variance) in a hierarchical cluster analysis using Ward distance.

We obtained a solution consisting of four clusters that we then characterized in terms of employer's perceived obligations and fulfilments through a series of bivariate analyses (T-tests). We then conducted additional analyses to validate the obtained clusters in relation to a set of variables which are theoretically related to the clusters but were not used to define them. These are cross-cultural adjustment, exit, voice, loyalty, and neglect. Based on these exploratory analyses we then suggested a number of propositions describing the characteristics of the SIEs' PCs, which are to be tested in future research.

FINDINGS

Different types of psychological contracts

Below we describe the obtained clusters (see Table 1). The descriptions are not intended to be absolute but to give a multidimensional picture of the key characteristics of SIEs based on the type of their PCs with the employer. The clusters are described using bivariate tests (T-tests).

Insert Table 1 here

Cluster 1: Average Balanced PC

The first cluster is the largest group comprising 36% of the total sample (n=87). The SIEs in this cluster tend to perceive their employers to have above average training (3.47 vs. 3.15; $t = 3.12$; $p \leq 0.001$) and below average relational (2.62 vs. 2.79; $t = -1.16$; $p \leq 0.05$) and transactional (2.70 vs. 2.83; $t = -1.77$; $p \leq 0.05$) obligations. The three dimensions taken together create a relatively average PC with reasonable and realistic SIEs' expectations. The SIEs also perceive that these have been fulfilled in the most balanced way as compared to the other three clusters. Whereas the training obligations are perceived to be slightly under-fulfilled (2.93 vs. 3.47), the other two dimensions are slightly over-fulfilled thus balancing the PC: relational (3.18 vs. 2.62) and transactional (3.05 vs. 2.70). All in all, this is a relatively balanced PC where a set of reasonable and average (across all other clusters) SIEs' beliefs is perceived to be relatively evenly fulfilled by the employer.

Cluster 2: Average Unbalanced PC

The second cluster includes 15% of the SIEs (n=36). In this type of PC, the SIEs perceive their employers to have average relational (2.88 vs. 2.79, ns.) but significantly higher training (3.57 vs. 3.15; $t = 2.34$; $p \leq 0.001$) and transactional (3.06 vs. 2.83; $t = 1.65$; $p \leq 0.05$) obligations. The obligations on all three dimensions are higher than in Cluster 1. More importantly, the perceived fulfillment is significantly lower on all dimensions than in Cluster 1, as well as in all other clusters, making this type of PC significantly more unbalanced and under-fulfilled: training (2.35 vs. 3.57), relational (2.75 vs. 2.88), and transactional (2.77 vs. 3.06). Whereas in this Cluster the training obligations are not perceived to be fulfilled which makes it similar to Cluster 1, the difference is that neither transactional nor relational obligations are fulfilled either.

Cluster 3: Low Over-delivered PC

This cluster contains 31% of the SIEs (n=75). The expatriates in this cluster perceive their employers to have low obligations on all three dimensions: training (2.41 vs. 3.15; $t = -6.98$; $p \leq 0.001$), relational (2.24 vs. 2.79; $t = -4.87$; $p \leq 0.001$), and transactional (2.44 vs. 2.83; $t = -4.54$; $p \leq 0.001$). These are the lowest perceived obligations on all three dimensions among the four clusters, indicating that these SIEs move abroad for other reasons than training, work, and / or finance. Interestingly, due to the low initial level of the obligations, they all are over-fulfilled: training (3.29 vs. 2.41), relational (3.00 vs. 2.24), and transactional (3.03 vs. 2.44). It means that in this cluster PC is breached by the employer due to its consistent perceived over-fulfillment.

Cluster 4: High Undelivered PC

This cluster groups 18% of the SIEs (n=44). The SIEs here tend to perceive their employers to have significantly higher perceived obligations on the three dimensions: training (3.53 vs. 3.15; $t = 2.35$; $p \leq 0.01$), relational (3.97 vs. 2.79; $t = 7.39$; $p \leq 0.001$), and transactional (3.60 vs. 2.83; $t = 6.17$; $p \leq 0.001$). These are the highest perceived obligations among all clusters. In contrast, the perceived fulfillment is below average and significantly lower than the perceived obligations: training (2.72 vs. 3.53), relational (2.74 vs. 3.97), and transactional (2.83 vs. 3.60). The PC breach due to its under-fulfillment is the largest in this cluster.

Psychological contract clusters validation

This section considers the relationship between the PC clusters and the SIEs' cross-cultural adjustment. It also examines the relationship with the four constructs of the EVLN framework (Farrell, 1983; Rusbult et al., 1988), namely exit, voice, loyalty, and neglect. These constructs are all theoretically related to the clusters but are not used in defining them. Therefore, they can be used for validating the established clusters (Ketchen and Shook, 1996). Table 2 below presents the clusters' validation statistics. Figure 1 then presents the resultant clusters.

Insert Table 2 and Figure 1 here

The SIEs with Average Balanced PCs in Cluster 1 scored significantly higher in work adjustment than the average (5.10 vs. 4.83; $t = 2.52$; $p \leq 0.01$) and higher than the SIEs in other clusters. On the remaining two dimensions their adjustment was on the sample average level (interactional: 4.76 vs. 4.71; general: 4.92 vs. 4.88). These SIEs also scored highest in terms of voice (promotive: 5.24 vs. 4.97; $t=3.36$; $p \leq 0.001$; prohibitive: 4.68 vs. 4.54; $t=1.67$; $p \leq 0.05$) and loyalty (4.16 vs. 3.99; $t=1.82$; $p \leq 0.05$); and lowest in exit (2.99 vs. 3.52; $t = -3.34$; $p \leq 0.001$) and neglect (1.50 vs. 1.63; $t = -3.34$; $p \leq 0.001$) among all clusters. Hence, this cluster consists of SIEs who, once they feel that the organization delivers what it has promised, care about the organization, want to be loyal to it, and speak up when they see a need for it.

The SIEs with Average Unbalanced PCs in Cluster 2 scored significantly lower in work (4.50 vs. 4.83; $t = -1.73$; $p \leq 0.05$) and general (4.57 vs. 4.88; $t = - 2.11$; $p \leq 0.05$) adjustments than the average. They also scored significantly higher in exit (3.87 vs. 3.52; $t = 1.46$; $p \leq 0.1$) and lower in promotive voice (4.66 vs. 4.97; = -2.11; $p \leq 0.05$). Loyalty and neglect were insignificant. In this cluster the SIEs seem to possess quite strong beliefs that the organization is obligated to provide them with extensive training and solid financial remuneration. If the expectations are not met, then these expatriates are likely to move on in their careers towards new experiences in new organizations.

In Cluster 3, the SIEs possessing Low Over-Delivered PCs scored averagely in terms of cross-cultural adjustment (general: 4.95 vs. 4.88; interactional: 4.69 vs. 4.71; work: 4.89 vs. 4.83) indicating

that over-fulfilling the PC obligations did not improve the SIEs' adjustment. These expatriates were also average in exit (3.45 vs. 3.52), loyalty (3.95 vs. 3.99), and neglect (1.72 vs. 1.63). Moreover, the PC over-fulfillment had a negative outcome – they scored significantly lower than the average in voice (promotive: 4.77 vs. 4.97; $t = -2.15$; $p \leq 0.05$; prohibitive: 4.40 vs. 4.54; $t = -1.79$; $p \leq 0.05$). This suggests that the over-fulfillment did not have any effect on these SIEs' loyalty, intentions to exit, and neglect but decreased their willingness to speak up in their organization. This cluster seems to include the SIEs who have relatively low expectations and their aspirations of going abroad may not be directly related to the organization as such. The organization may be just a medium to achieve their other goals in life, e.g. living in a foreign country and learning about a new culture. They do not expect much from the organization, but also do not give much back.

Finally, in Cluster 4 the SIEs with High Undelivered PCs scored significantly lower only on work adjustment (4.47 vs. 4.83; $t = -2.14$; $p \leq 0.05$). The other two dimensions were at the average levels (general: 4.89 vs. 4.88 and interactional: 4.71 vs. 4.71). Similar to Cluster 2, they also had significantly higher scores in exit (4.20 vs. 3.52; $t = 3.05$; $p \leq 0.001$). Otherwise, the rest of the scores were at the average level (promotive voice: 5.01 vs. 4.97; prohibitive voice: 4.50 vs. 4.54; loyalty: 3.88 vs. 3.99; and neglect: 1.63 vs. 1.63). This indicates that even the extensive under-fulfillment of the perceived obligations affected only very selective aspects of the SIEs' attitudes and behaviors. For these SIEs the most important aspect of the PC seems to be relational and, if unfulfilled and breached, it decreases their work adjustment, ultimately increasing their intentions to exit. These expatriates express their dissatisfaction with their legs rather than through voice or neglect.

DISCUSSION

Based on the obtained results of the clusters' validation we can make the following observations concerning the relationships between the SIEs' perceived employers' obligations and their fulfillment and the SIEs' cross-cultural adjustment and potential responses in terms of exit, voice, loyalty, and neglect. First, it appears that PC under-fulfillment is likely to result in negative attitudes and behaviors among SIEs. This is in line with PC research in other areas which has found PC under-

fulfillment to be generally conducive to negative employee outcomes, such as turnover intentions, job satisfaction, and, among other things, organizational commitment (Zhao et al., 2007). Yet, in the case of SIEs these negative outcomes appear to be very specific and selective. Judging from Clusters 2 and 4, it seems that among SIEs PC under-fulfillment lowers cross-cultural adjustment (especially the work-related dimension) and increases intentions to exit the organization. At the same time, it does not affect SIEs' loyalty to and voice in the organization. This indicates that when faced with a PC under-fulfillment SIEs tend to react actively by quitting the organization rather than engaging in constructive responses attempting to revive satisfactory employment relations by being loyal or voicing their dissatisfaction. Therefore, we suggest the following proposition:

Proposition 1: *In the case of SIEs, the perceived under-fulfillment of employers' obligations is likely to result in lower cross-cultural adjustment and higher exit intentions, but is not likely to affect loyalty and / or voice.*

However, based on our results it is difficult to identify precisely an under-fulfillment of what type of PC obligations, i.e. transactional, relational, or training, leads to more negative employee outcomes among SIEs. As we showed previously, there are inconclusive results among AEs concerning whether AEs' PC is of relational (Guzzo et al., 1994) or transactional (Pate and Scullion, 2010) type. Similarly, it is difficult to make a firm conclusion also in the case of SIEs, because the under-fulfillment of all three types of obligations seems to contribute to negative SIE's outcomes. It potentially reflects the heterogeneous nature of the SIE's population where expatriates hold a wide range of motivations to relocate, career goals, and aspirations that, ultimately, makes it difficult to narrowly define the SIEs' PC and the centrality of its constitutive elements. Hence, we propose the following:

Proposition 2: *In the case of SIEs, due to the heterogeneous nature of the SIE's population the SIE's PCs can be of any of the three types, i.e. training, relational, and / or transactional.*

Yet, it appears that there are differences when it comes to over-fulfilling PC. Based on Clusters 1 and 3, it seems that the perceived PC over-fulfillment in relational obligations (see Cluster

1) leads to better employee outcomes among SIEs than the over-fulfillment of training and transactional obligations (Cluster 3). The former seems to result in better work-related adjustment, higher loyalty and voice, and lower exit and neglect. The latter appears to have almost no effect besides lowering voice. This actually suggests that for organizations it's more beneficial to ensure that they over-fulfill their relational PC obligations towards SIEs than transactional and / or training. It also implies that, if looked from the over-fulfillment point of view, the SIE's PC is of relational type, thus echoing the findings of Pate and Scullion (2010) among traditional expatriates.

A competing interpretation is that the PCs of the SIEs in Cluster 1 tend to be of more balanced type than those in Cluster 3. It means that whilst the PC is over-fulfilled in terms of relational (and to some extent transactional) obligations, it is slightly under-fulfilled in terms of training obligations. The resultant PC appears to be rather balanced. On the other hand, the initial perceived employer's obligations among the SIEs in Cluster 3 are the lowest among all the clusters and, because of the low starting point, they are all over-fulfilled by the organizations (tough only the training over-fulfillment is statistically significant). Yet, despite of this consistent PC over-fulfillment, the employee outcomes are weaker among the SIEs in Cluster 3 than in Cluster 1. This is in line with other studies that found the balance between perceived obligations and their fulfillment to be a more important predictor of PC positive employee outcomes than the level of either PC obligations or PC fulfillment (McDermott et al., 2013). Therefore, we suggest two additional competing propositions, which call for future research to be either verified or refuted:

Proposition 3: *In the case of SIEs, the perceived over-fulfillment of employer's relational obligations is likely to result in better employee outcomes than the over-fulfillment of training and / or transactional obligations.*

Proposition 4: *In the case of SIEs, irrespective of the level of obligations, the balanced PC (in terms of the balance between the perceived employer's obligations and their fulfilment) is likely to result in more positive employee outcomes than the PC under- and / or over-fulfillment.*

CONCLUSION

The PC is an important and powerful explanatory concept for understanding employee attitudes and behaviors in the employment relationships (Janssens et al., 2003; McDermott et al., 2013). In this paper, we have applied this concept to the previously unexplored group of employees, namely SIEs (Doherty, 2013). The fact that these expatriates have not been studied up to now in terms of their PC relations with their organizations is unfortunate considering their growing numbers and the importance and the benefits that they carry both for economies and organizations globally (Dickmann and Baruch, 2011; Doherty, 2013). It is also important in light of the recently noted changing nature of the traditional expatriate PC (Pate and Scullion, 2010).

Thus, through a cluster analysis the study explored the types of PCs that can be found among SIEs. It has identified four different clusters: *Average Balanced*, *Average Unbalanced*, *Low Over-Delivered*, and *High Undelivered*. It also validated the obtained PC clusters by examining the relationships between PC and cross-cultural adjustment as well as exit, voice, loyalty, and neglect among the SIEs in the clusters. We found that SIEs' PCs are likely to be heterogeneous due to the heterogeneity of SIEs themselves. Since their motivations to relocate and key underlying career motives are more diverse and subjective than those of traditional expatriates (Jokinen et al., 2008; Doherty et al., 2011), their PCs are also likely to be diverse reflecting their personal situations, subjective career outlooks, and various situational factors.

At the same time, we found an interesting difference between PC under-fulfillment and over-fulfillment in the case of SIEs. Basically, it appears that for organizations to optimize their SIEs' attitudes and behaviors, it makes sense to focus on ensuring that the SIE's relational expectations are over-fulfilled. The over-fulfillment of other obligations turned out to result in less positive employee outcomes, up to the point when a consistent over-fulfillment of all three types of obligations does not produce positive results, as it was the case of the SIEs in Cluster 3 with *Low Over-Delivered PCs*. Instead our findings speak in favor of organizations ensuring that the SIEs' PC is balanced, that is, that the perceived employer's obligations match as closely as possible their perceived fulfillments.

Overall, this study is but one of the first attempts to map the types of PC found among SIEs and to examine their relationships with important SIEs' outcomes. It suggests several propositions that need to be tested in future research. Moreover, the derived typology of SIE's PCs needs to be verified on other samples. Future research should also afford attention to examining the impact of PC breach from the employee's side on employee outcomes. Finally, it would make sense to conduct a comparative study of the relationships between PC and employee outcomes among AEs and SIEs.

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Table 1: Clusters description in terms of employer's obligations and fulfilments

	Sample average	Cluster 1 (36%) **Average Balanced**	Cluster 2 (15%) **Average Unbalanced**	Cluster 3 (31%) **Low Over-Delivered**	Cluster 4 (18%) **High Undelivered**
Employer's obligations					
Training	M = 3.15	**m = 3.47** **(t = 3.12 ; p ≤ 0.001)**	**m = 3.57** **(t = 2.34 ; p ≤ 0.001)**	*m = 2.41* *(t = -6.98; p ≤ 0.001)*	**m = 3.53** **(t = 2.35 ; p = 0.01)**
Relational	M = 2.79	*m = 2.62* *(t = -1.64 ; p = 0.05)*	m = 2.88 (ns)	*m = 2.24* *(t = -4.87 ; p ≤ 0.001)*	**m = 3.97** **(t = 7.39; p ≤ 0.001)**
Transactional	M = 2.83	*m = 2.70* *(t = -1.77 ; p = 0.04)*	**m = 3.06** **(t = 1.65 ; p = 0.05)**	*m = 2.44* *(t = -4.54 ; p ≤ 0.001)*	**m = 3.60** **(t = 6.17 ; p ≤ 0.001)**
Employer's fulfilments					
Training	M = 2.90	m = 2.93 (ns)	*m = 2.35* *(t = -3.00 ; p = 0.001)*	**m = 3.29** **(t = 3.15 ; p ≤ 0.001)**	m = 2.72 (ns)
Relational	M = 2.98	**m = 3.18** **(t = 2.02 ; p = 0.02)**	*m = 2.75* *(t = -1.31; p = 0.09)*	m = 3.00 (ns)	*m = 2.74* *(t = -1.50 ; p = 0.06)*
Transactional	M = 2.96	m = 3.05 (ns)	*m = 2.77* *(t = -1.27 ; p = 0.10)*	m = 3.03 (ns)	m = 2.83 (ns)

Table 2: Clusters description in terms of cross-cultural adjustment, exit, voice, loyalty, and, neglect

	Sample average	Cluster 1 (36%) **Average Balanced**	Cluster 2 (15%) **Average Unbalanced**	Cluster 3 (31%) **Low Over-Delivered**	Cluster 4 (18%) **High Undelivered**
Cross-cultural adjustment					
General living	M = 4.88	m = 4.92 (ns)	*m = 4.57* *(t = -2.11; p = 0.02)*	m = 4.95 (ns)	m = 4.89 (ns)
Interactional	M = 4.71	m = 4.76 (ns)	m = 4.47 (ns)	m = 4.69 (ns)	m = 4.71 (ns)
Work	M = 4.83	**m = 5.10** **(t = 2.52 ; p = 0.006)**	*m = 4.50* *(t = -1.73 ; p = 0.04)*	m = 4.89 (ns)	*m = 4.47* *(t = -2.14 ; p = 0.02)*
EVLN framework					
Exit	M = 3.52	*m = 2.99* *(t = -3.34 ; p = 0.001)*	**m = 3.87** **(t = 1.46 ; p = 0.07)**	m = 3.45 (ns)	**m = 4.20** **(t = 3.05 ; p = 0.001)**
Promotive voice	M = 4.97	**m = 5.24** **(t = 3.36 ; p = 0.001)**	*m = 4.66* *(t = -2.11 ; p = 0.02)*	*m = 4.77* *(t = -2.15 ; p = 0.02)*	m = 5.01 (ns)
Prohibitive voice	M = 4.54	**m = 4.68** **(t = 1.67 ; p = 0.05)**	m = 4.61 (ns)	*m = 4.40* *(t = -1.79 ; p = 0.04)*	m = 4.50 (ns)
Loyalty	M = 3.99	**m = 4.16** **(t = 1.82 ; p = 0.03)**	m = 3.83 (ns)	m = 3.95 (ns)	m = 3.88 (ns)
Neglect	M = 1.63	*m = 1.50* *(t = -3.34 ; p = 0.001)*	m = 1.79 (ns)	m = 1.72 (ns)	m = 1.63 (ns)
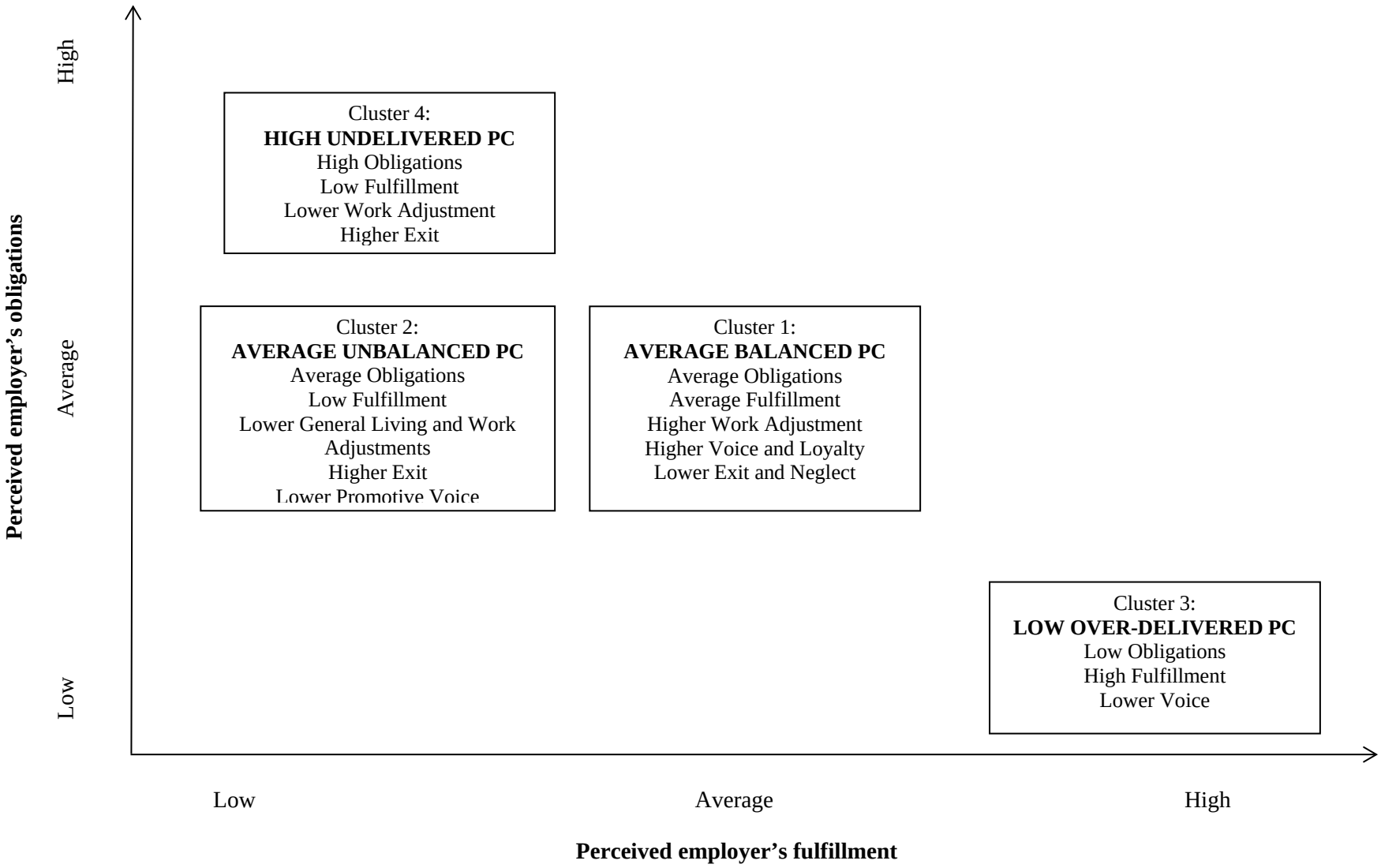
Figure 1: The resultant typology of SIEs' PCs