

Diplomats' Immunity to Foreignness: Socialization, Preparation and Work Environment in Expatriate Adjustment

Diplomatların Yabancılığa Karşı Bağışıklığı: Yurtdışında Görevli Çalışanların Uyumunda Sosyalleşme, Hazırlık ve Çalışma Ortamı

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Abstract

This paper studies expatriate adjustment of diplomats as a polar case, addressing non-MNE expatriates from Turkey with a three-stage, multi-method research design. We focus on how professional socialization, work environment, and pre-departure preparation influence expatriate adjustment in diplomats. Our study also has developed a series of theoretical models on pre-departure training, international experience, and perceptions of diplomats, and the dimensions of diplomats' professional socialization based on our multi-stage and multi-method empirical study. In conclusion, we discuss our models' applicability to similar professional and organizational settings with strong professional norms and high job standardization levels. We also suggest further issues for researchers willing to study different professions and expatriate adjustment.

Keywords: Expatriates, adjustment, socialization, diplomats, Turkey

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Özet

Bu çalışmada, yurtdışında görevli çalışanların uyumları, uç bir vaka örneği olarak diplomatlar üzerinden araştırılmıştır. Çok uluslu şirket elemanı olmayan Türk diplomatlarının yurt dışı görevlerinde çalışma ve yaşam alanlarına uyumu, üç adımlı ve çok yönlü bir araştırma tasarımıyla incelenmiştir. Çalışmada, mesleki sosyalleşme, çalışma ortamı, ve yurt dışı göreve gitmeden önceki hazırlıkların, yurtdışında görevli çalışanlar olarak diplomatların yabancı ülkelere uyumlarını nasıl etkilediğine odaklanılmıştır. Ulaşılan sonuçlar kapsamında, diplomatların yurt dışı göreve gitmeden önce aldıkları eğitimin, uluslararası deneyim ve algılarının, ve mesleki sosyalleşme boyutlarının uyuma olan etkisi, bir dizi kuramsal modelle tarif edilmiştir. Sonuç bölümünde, çok adımlı ve çok yönlü bir görgül çalışmayla geliştirilen bu kuramsal modellerin, güçlü mesleki normlar ve yüksek seviyede iş standartlaşması içeren benzeri mesleki ve örgütsel ortamlarda uygulanabilirliği tartışılmıştır. Ayrıca, farklı mesleklere sahip yurt dışında görevli çalışanların uyumu araştırmalarına devam etmek isteyen araştırmacılar için bazı öneriler de geliştirilmiştir.

Anahtar kelimeler: Yurt dışında görevli çalışanlar, uyum, sosyalleşme, diplomatlar, Türkiye

Introduction

With multinationals and government agencies assigning more expatriates and the workforce getting increasingly globalized, expatriate numbers grow significantly in the world. The total expatriate population worldwide is estimated to be 66,2 million in 2017, with a compound annual growth rate of 5.8% since 2013, expected to reach around 87,5 million in 2021 (Finaccord, 2017). Therefore, adjusting these people to foreign cultural conditions and values and novel role responsibilities in their new work environments are crucially significant. While expatriate adjustment research primarily studies multinational employees, diplomats represent a unique expatriate group, as expatriation is a natural part of their profession. Diplomats' adjustment represents an extreme empirical condition. Their home country embeddedness continues wherever they go since their organization covers the world. Their role responsibilities rarely change while they circulate the world. As they are away from job-related variations, understanding the adjustment mechanisms of diplomats may contribute to our understanding of expatriate adjustment.

This article studies how diplomats adjust to their international assignments in their professional careers as distinct expatriates. Because diplomats have strong professional ties and work as civil servants for non-profit purposes, the nature of

the diplomatic work is different. Expatriation is not only natural but is a central part of their career. Their daily job routines are mostly intact wherever they are assigned. A premature return is seldom due to professional norms. This paper explicitly explores diplomats' adjustment in their overseas assignments concerning their professional socialization, work environment, job content, and pre-departure training.

The study represents a relevant contribution to the literature for several reasons. Firstly, expatriate employees of non-profit settings are understudied compared to expatriates of multinationals. Secondly, as expatriation makes a central part of their profession, understanding their adjustment can contribute to our understanding of other professions' adjustment. Thirdly, expatriate literature mostly focuses on expatriates originating from developed countries. However, in our paper, we have studied expatriates from a developing country context. Lastly, our study is a multi-method study and includes methodological novelties.

Research has mostly considered expatriation in multinational enterprises (MNEs). However, diplomats and military personnel had been the first regular expatriates long before MNEs stepped into the global scene. For instance, overseas employees' first cross-cultural training (CCT) applications have started in the Foreign Service Institute⁽¹⁾ (Paige & Martin, 1996). Furthermore, the Peace Corps volunteers and foreign exchange students were subjects in the initial research projects in expatriate adjustment and effectiveness (Church, 1982). However, expatriation research appears to have primarily neglected several expatriate types over time, focusing almost entirely on the MNE employees. Today, there are increasingly more expatriate employees working in global organizations other than MNEs. Public and transnational organizations, NGOs, and research institutions are some organizations employing expatriates. We recommend Baruch, Dickmann, Altman & Bournois (2013) for a holistic categorization of diverse international work. As expatriation is also prevalent in these organizations, there is a need for more studies on expatriate employees in various non-profit organizational settings.

“The diplomatic service is probably the archetype of expatriation” (Baruch et al., 2013, p. 2383). Among expatriates outside MNEs, diplomats historically rep-

(1) <http://www.state.gov/m/fsi/> “The Foreign Service Institute (FSI) is the Federal Government’s primary training institution for officers and support personnel of the U.S. Foreign Affairs community, preparing American diplomats and other professionals to advance U.S. foreign affairs interests overseas and in Washington.”

resent a significant and unique group. Many diplomats are regularly assigned to international posts temporarily (but usually for the long term) to further their organization's interests. Diplomats are exceptional because the expatriation process defines their work and profession. While their expatriation is organization-supported (Baruch et al., 2013), diplomats experience a natural and regular part of their professional career. However, diplomats are not entirely immune to problems, as they also face socialization and adjustment issues. During expatriation, the breadth of interaction is holistic, including work and non-work life (Baruch et al., 2013). However, the literature on expatriation of diplomats is minimal (Davoine, Ravasi, Salamin & Cudré-Mauroux, 2013; Groeneveld, 2008; Niedner-Kalthoff, 2006). Expatriate managers' work is 'boundary spanners' (Au & Fukuda, 2002; Johnson & Duxbury, 2010) and 'cultural carriers' (Gao, 2006), considering expatriates as 'cross-border ambassadors' (Moreno, 2004; Saner & Yiu, 2005; Saner, Yiu & Sondergaard, 2000). Furthermore, diplomats have similar characteristics (education, social background, job backgrounds) to top managers. Empirically, the expatriation of diplomats is like "military deployments." They also involve standardized work environments with strong home-country sentiments and sound professional norms. The enlisted level soldiers may also be financially constrained in some cases, making them very similar to expatriates originating from a developing country context. However, the military deployments literature is mostly concerned with soldiers' health issues (Nindl et al., 2013; Goff, Crow, Reisbig & Hamilton, 2007) and adjustment of their family members (Peebleskleiger and Kleiger, 1994; Lyle, 2006; Andres 2011), during and after their return.

The literature on expatriate issues primarily focuses on the developed, 'Western' parts of the world, such as North America, Europe, Japan, and Australia, mostly neglecting expatriation from developing and less-developed countries (e.g., Black, 1988; Caligiuri, Philips, Lazarova, Tarique & Biirgi, 2001; Gregersen & Black, 1990; Koveshnikov, Wechtler & Dejoux, 2014). As Okpara & Kabongo (2011) firmly state, additional research is needed from non-western contexts to research expatriate adjustment and our understanding of the process forward. Similarly, Harrison, Shaffer & Bhaskar-Shrinivas (2004, p. 240) argue "research on expatriate experiences seems to have evolved into reliance on a comfortable (although difficult, at least in terms of population access) paradigm and well-worn road." However, studying expatriate adjustment "from" and "to" emerging countries may lead to taking cultural context more seriously and con-

sidering problems that a Western expatriate may never face (Abrashi-Smajli & Baum, 2017).

Methodologically, our focus represents a 'polar' condition, as it covers non-MNE and non-Western expatriates. Polar cases are theoretically fruitful options as they "stimulate theory development because they involve theoretical sampling of extremes to develop and examine extreme or contrasting patterns" (Mills, Durepos & Wiebe, 2010, p. 686). The study comprises a three-stage, multi-method research design: a qualitative first stage, a quantitative second stage, and a qualitative third stage to elaborate on our results. Our primary intention is to develop a theoretical model based on our empirical study.

The paper is structured as follows: we first present our study's position, followed by a critical review of expatriate adjustment literature. Next, we describe our methods employed in the three stages of our research. We then report our quantitative and qualitative findings. In the final part, first, we introduce our model based on our results. Second, we draw our conclusions, including implications for research and practice and recommendations for further study.

Adjustment of Expatriates

Expatriates are employees of business organizations sent overseas (Harrison, Shaffer & Bhaskar-Shrinivas, 2004). Expatriation is "sending parent company nationals to another country, or the host country, to perform management duties" (Harvey & Kiessling, 2004, p. 552). Issues related to expatriates have been a significant research area within the international business literature (e.g., Collings, Scullion & Morley, 2007). Expatriation continues to grow with the increased prevalence of globalization in the world economy (Malek & Budhwar, 2013). Most studies in this field investigate expatriates' various reactions, such as "concerns and expectations of dual-career expatriates, adjustment, psychological withdrawal, pre-departure thoughts, commitment, and perceptions of justice of local workers" (Werner, 2002: 291).

There is extensive literature on the expatriation process's challenges and problems (e.g., Adler, 1983; Black & Mendenhall, 1990; Collings, Scullion & Morley, 2007; Dowling, Festing & Engles, 2008). An inadequate adjustment is one of the expatriates' most common grounds for the premature termination of overseas assignments (Takeuchi, Yun & Tesluk, 2002). Adjustment is the extent to which an expatriate feels psychologically comfortable concerning various aspects of an

unfamiliar environment (e.g., Caligiuri, 1997; Meziyas & Scandura, 2005). Many negative consequences, such as poor performance, premature return, and repatriation failure, are primary consequences of the inability to adjust (e.g., Chew, 2004; Mendenhall, Dunbar & Oddou, 1987; Tung, 1982). Therefore, it has continued to receive considerable research interest for many years (e.g., Newman, Bhatt & Gutteridge, 1978), both theoretically (e.g., Aycan, 1997b; Black, Mendenhall & Oddou, 1991; Thomas, 1998) and empirically (e.g., Black & Stevens, 1989; Malek & Budhwar, 2013; Shaffer, Harrison & Gilley, 1999). While critically crucial for expatriation's success, the adjustment process has a complex and multidimensional nature, identified along with three facets: general, interaction, and work adjustment (Black, 1988; Black & Stephens, 1989). Antecedents and consequences of expatriate adjustment have been frequently studied (see Takeuchi (2010), or Puck, Holtbrügge & Raupp (2017) for extensive overviews).

Several empirical studies on expatriate adjustment focus on the impact of various individual and contextual (i.e., work, organizational, or institutional) factors on adjustment (see Hechanova et al., 2003 for a comprehensive meta-analysis). One of the most comprehensive models developed to date that takes both individual and contextual variables into account is Black et al.'s "Framework of International Adjustment" (1991, p. 303). By combining literature on domestic and international adjustment, the framework includes both anticipatory (i.e., before the international assignment) and in-country adjustment. According to Black et al. (1991), the anticipatory adjustment comprises training and previous experiences as individual factors to create accurate expectations. Secondly, selection mechanisms and criteria are organizational factors. On the other hand, the in-country adjustment stage consists of five more complex variables related to both modes of adjustment and degree of adjustment. The variables are individual (personal characteristics and skills), job (role clarity, discretion, novelty, and conflict), organization culture (culture novelty, social support, and logistical help), organization socialization (in terms of socialization tactics and content), and non-work (culture novelty and family/spouse adjustment).

As a critical component of expatriate anticipatory adjustment, CCT has long been a significant research field (e.g., Brislin & Pedersen, 1976; Black & Mendenhall, 1990; Forster, 2000; Gupta, Everett & Cathro, 2008; for a review, see Littrell, Salas, Hess, Paley & Riedel, 2006). CCT is for preparing people to live and work in specific or across cultures (e.g., Paige & Martin, 1996). A CCT program can be culture-specific, giving information about a particular culture and

guidelines for interaction with its members (Brislin & Pedersen, 1976). It can also be culture-general, developing an understanding and awareness of the self, fundamental similarities among people, and different cultures (Blake, Heslin & Curtis, 1996). Independent of the approach, CCT has been one of the essential processes that augment expatriate adjustment (e.g., Bhagat & Prien, 1996; Mendenhall, Punnett & Ricks, 1995). While most studies show evidence of a positive effect of CCT on adjustment, researchers have also reported some mixed findings. For instance, in their review, Mendenhall, Stahl, Ehnert, Oddou, Osland & Kühlmann (2004) found one study showing a partially negative impact. Hechanova, Beehr & Christiansen (2003), in their meta-analysis, show even a significant negative influence of training on adjustment. There is also mixed evidence from research conducted in different countries. For example, Waxin and Panaccio (2005) show a positive role of CCT on the various facets of expatriates' adjustment in India. Selmer (2006) found that CCT does not influence expatriates' general and interaction adjustment in China and merely impacts professional adjustment.

Empirical Context: Expatriate Adjustment Literature from Turkey

This subsection provides a brief discussion of Turkey-originated expatriate adjustment studies to familiarize the readers with literature regarding this specific empirical context. Expatriate managers' problems started to appear in journals starting with the 1990s in Turkey. As one of the early research articles, Culpan and Culpan (1993) compared expatriate managers' backgrounds, job satisfaction, and perception of local work and cultural environment in Turkey regarding their adaptation and job performance. They recommended firstly, selecting expatriate managers considering their likelihood to adapt to work and the country conditions, and secondly, training and preparing both expatriate and local managers.

In an exciting study, Aycan and Berry (1996) researched employment-related experiences of Turkish immigrants' psychological well-being and adaptation to Canada. They noted that the respondents were educated but unemployed or underemployed. Lack of language competencies and accreditation recognized in Canada and the lack of local work experience were the most significant barriers. They noted the adversities in employment, like status loss, unemployment, and underemployment, harm psychological well-being, and adaptation.

Later, Sinangil and Ones (1997) collected data from expatriates in Turkey and their one Turkish co-worker. They asked the local co-worker to rate the im-

portance of success factors for expatriate success. Then they asked them to rate the specific expatriate they work together within their company. The host country co-workers' perceived characteristics were job knowledge, motivation, relational skills, flexibility/adaptability, extra-cultural openness, and family situation. These variables relate "moderately but consistently" to the expatriate's cross-cultural adjustment. Sinangil and Ones (1998) also studied the big five personality factors and expatriates' job performance in Turkey. They inferred that conscientiousness is a poor predictor of expatriate job performance. In the late 1990s, Yavas and Bodur (1999a; 1999b) studied correlates and consequences of adjustment and satisfaction. Focusing on expatriate managers' commitment, they identified factors related to expatriate managers' satisfaction (1999a) and adjustment (1999b). They suggested a company focus on "the values, beliefs, habits, religion, languages of Turkish operations" (Yavas & Bodur, 1999b).

Turkey increased its significance in the global business arena from the 2000s, calling for research to describe Turkish national culture to Western expatriate managers. For example, Gopalan and Kavas (2005) explained Turkish culture and its potential impact on business practices, emphasizing dualistic forces and sub-cultural dynamics. Trying to understand Turkish culture better than others, Wang and Nayir (2006) contrasted expatriate adjustment in China and Turkey, focusing on their social networking. They suggested that while social interaction predicts expatriate adjustment, it works differently across cultures and geographies, revealing different social interaction patterns. Similarly, Foldes, Ones, and Sinangil (2006) studied expatriate adjustment and job performance, social desirability, and impression management. They argued that impression management has no relation to either adjustment or job performance, despite theoretical expectations for a predictive and mediated relationship through cross-cultural adjustment. More recently, Sinangil, Ones, and Wiernik (2018) studied the impact of integrity measures to predict counterproductive work behaviors and job performance in expatriate contexts. They studied 220 expatriates in Turkey, examining the validity of integrity for international adjustments and job performance. They found evidence for predicting job performance and counterproductive work, however no relation to international adjustment.

During the 2000s, expatriate-related gender issues in Turkey also appeared in the literature. For example, Taylor and Napier (2001) studied foreign female professionals in Turkey with a narrative approach. They suggested "the importance of foreign education over gender and the influence economic development

of the host country may exert on women's success" (p. 347). Similarly, Napier and Taylor (2002) studied women professionals' experiences in Japan, China, and Turkey, comparatively. They outlined the challenges women faced in gaining credibility, having high visibility and responsibility, requiring keen interpersonal skills, using networks extensively, and feeling frustrated with social life outside of the workplace. They also highlighted the generally high performance of female expatriates, like Sinangil and Ones (2003), which calls for more gender-diverse expatriate selection.

Richardson (2006) extended this stream towards the family and explored the family's role in deciding to expatriate independently. He collected qualitative data from expatriate academics in Turkey and three other countries. This study found that the family and significant others play a vital role in independent expatriation decisions. In contrast, Richardson (2008) reported her rich data collected from British academics in the same four countries to describe aspects of academic expatriation stages. Similarly, Bikos et al. (2007a; 2007b) studied female spouses' adaptation with 32 American female spouses of expatriates in Ankara, Turkey. Their qualitative study (2007a) found eight themes: pre-departure preparation, settling in, expatriation's impact on the wife's life roles, social and emotional functioning, approaches to coping, supportive systems, language, and interaction with the host culture. They reported differences in the life roles (i.e., occupational, parent, marital, homecare) and no support for a culture shock/U-curve model for their adaptation in the quantitative study (2007b). Bikos and Kocheleva (2013) developed a more complex model explaining life roles and mental health outcomes. The study covers an empirical analysis of 86 English-speaking, Northern American, or Western European spouses in Turkey. This article reports that the occupational role is the least important. In contrast, spouses value their parental role more than their marital role. These results suggest an intricate pattern between different parts explaining the variance in psychological well-being.

Similarly, Ones, Foldes, and Sinangil (2017) studied spouses' and children's roles in expatriate adjustment, intention to stay, and job performance in private and public domains. They collected data from expatriates and their Turkish co-workers, reporting marital status, family presence, adjustment, and family support impacting outcome variables. They found accompanied children are more pronounced by the expatriates than that of their spouses. Additionally, family support influences only job performance, without any effect on adjustment or staying intentions (Ones, Foldes, and Sinangil, 2017).

While Richardson (2006; 2008) studied academics as a group of self-initiated expatriates, several others studied academic expatriates in Turkey. For example, Katrinli and Penbek (2010) investigated the relationship between intercultural sensitivity and the academics' perceived creativity with academics from Turkey and the USA. They identified a positive relationship, considering culture as a moderating effect. Similarly, Danisman (2017) researched self-initiated expatriate academics' attitudes towards their host culture and collected qualitative data from 18 participants from 13 countries in Turkey. He discovered communication, religion, food culture, daily life, social relations, and structure as the main influencing themes. Expatriates may become adjusted, exploring, or missing home, feeling like a native, an explorer, or a stranger.

Another research stream focuses on the behavior of Turkish co-workers as host-country nationals (HCNs). For example, Arman and Aycan (2013) explored HCNs' perceptions of expatriates' attitudes and behaviors. They developed and validated a measure, with 24 items loading on five factors, in two studies. Later, Varma, Aycan, Budhwar, Pichler, Uygur, and Paluch (2016) studied HCNs' support to expatriates in Turkey. They studied perceived values' similarity, in-group/out-group categorization, interpersonal affect, and HCNs' willingness to offer role information and social support to expatriates. Their findings confirmed HCNs are likely to support expatriates they categorize as in-group, holding similar values. They also found that Turkish co-workers are likely to support Indian expatriates more than Americans and more likely to support supervisors than subordinate expatriates.

Few studies analyzed expatriates of non-Western origin in Turkey. For example, Danisman and Kutanis (2012) investigated cultural similarity. They surveyed South Korean expatriates in Turkey and the USA. Their results indicated that they maintain a stable relationship with their home country, and "their relationship with host countries change based on cultural similarities and differences" (p. 9626). Later, Danisman (2013) explored South Korean expatriate managers' views of Turkish and American cultures using metaphors. They located "confusion, competition, and exploration ideas" (p.1) from expatriates in Turkey and "adaptation, communion, and integration" (p.1) from expatriates in the USA. However, both groups shared "feeling love and having loyalty to the host country" (p.1).

Pre-Departure Training and Expatriate Adjustment

The literature has divergent findings on the impact of pre-departure training (PDT) on adjustment. For example, Wrutz (2014) drew from social learning theory to analyze the impact of pre-departure and in-country training on performance and noted the impact of only in-country training on performance. He could identify no impact of pre-departure CCT. However, the study only controls the training's timing and location without considering training characteristics, such as intensiveness, length, quality of the trainer, and training design. Moreover, he measured performance on a single self-report item, open to perception bias in a single multinational firm. Therefore, like Ran and Huang (2019) argue, more comprehensive criteria would be appropriate for CCT effectiveness.

Wrutz (2014) also suggested we need more studies on PDT programs' boundary conditions involving other variables and dimensions. He recommended studying training types, content, format, trainer, and trainees, possibly from more data sources. Similarly, Papademetriou (2015) identified no significant quantitative impact of implementing pre-departure and in-country CCT sequentially. However, the qualitative findings indicated an impact on sociocultural and psychological adjustment, arguing that the effectiveness of CCT does not depend on sequence and location but more on the timing and the content.

There are also studies supporting PDT programs. For example, Kempf and Holtbrügge (2020) reported that the trainee's international experience, the cultural distance between the home and the host country, personality factors, and the trainee's learning style moderate CCT effectiveness. Similarly, Martins and Tomé (2015) studied the methods, problems, and consequences of PDT in detail and suggested organizations develop PDT programs. They emphasized that the lack of PDT has perverse effects on adjustment. They reported PDT is beneficial when there are a considerable cultural distance and no previous expatriation experience. They also identified those positive perceptions about the assignment lower anxiety levels, and are positively related to the expatriate's commitment, contributing to the psychological contract between the organization and the expatriate. In an earlier study, Lazarova and Caligiuri (2001) tested the expatriates' perceptions. They concluded that when expatriates perceive organizational support and preparation as sufficient for expatriation, the international assignment's perceived ambiguity reduces, leading to retention and adjustment.

We consider the learning process that involves the integrated functioning of thinking, feeling, perceiving, and behaving in an interactive environment (Kolb, 1984; Kolb, Boyatzis, & Mainemelis, 2001). Therefore, despite the mixed results in the literature, we recommend that expatriate organizations keep deploying pre-departure training. Expatriate organizations should focus on its content, style, and delivery of these training programs, considering the level of prior international experience and degree of assignment-related perceptions as moderating factors.

Socialization in Expatriate Adjustment

Socialization (Feldman, 1976) is positively related to job satisfaction (Ashforth, Saks & Lee, 1998; Major et al., 1995), organizational commitment (Ashford & Taylor, 1990; Ashforth et al., 1998; Klein & Weaver, 2000), and performance (Ashford & Taylor, 1990; Bauer & Green, 1994). It also decreases turnover intentions (Ashforth et al., 1998; Major et al., 1995). Socialization literature explains how newcomers learn about their jobs and the new environment. An expatriate's socialization with the host country and the host organization can significantly influence the adjustment process (Haslberger & Brewster, 2009). Black (1988) and Black et al. (1991) are among the early researchers, acknowledging the locals' role inside and outside the host organization. They suggest that the local people and the local social context might be the wealthiest information source for adjusting expatriates. Aycan (1997a: 21), in her review of expatriate management, suggests that "socialization and support in the local unit" are among the most critical factors. These factors fundamentally influence the expatriate acculturation process. Similarly, Kraimer, Wayne & Jaworski (2001) argue that the host organization's insiders' social support also positively impacts adjustment and other job-related measures.

However, there is still a limited number of studies that deal specifically with the relationship between socialization and expatriate adjustment. For example, Palthe (2004) studied American expatriates' cross-cultural adjustment in Japan, the Netherlands, and South Korea. She argued that host company socialization is an essential factor of cross-cultural adjustment and a strong predictor of adjustment. More recently, Firth, Chen, Kirkman, and Kim (2014) focused on work adjustment, acknowledging its similarity with adjustment in newcomer

socialization research (Bauer et al., 2007). They found that cross-cultural motivation and psychological empowerment are positively related to initial adjustment levels and indirectly and negatively to work adjustment change. Moreover, challenge stressors are positively associated with work adjustment changes, relating work adjustment to expatriates' assignment satisfaction and premature return intention.

While these results are crucial for regular expatriates, there is a research gap for studying diplomats' socialization in the host country as an essential question. As diplomats work in secluded consulates and embassy campuses with a relatively smaller number of HCNs than other expatriates, their host country socialization may be slower. Therefore, studying diplomats' socialization and adjustment can provide novel explanations on expatriates' work adjustment as a polar condition.

In our paper, we adopt the socialization definition by Bauer, Morrison & Callister (1998: p.150). It states socialization as "the process by which an individual acquires the attitudes, behavior, and knowledge needed to participate as a (...) member" of a social entity. Socialization is a primary process by which people adapt to new social environments and adjust to new social settings (Chao, O'Leary-Kelly, Wolf, Klein & Garnder, 1994; Louis, 1980). It is also a multidimensional construct. Chao et al. (1994) described six dimensions: performance proficiency, people, politics, language, organizational goals and values, and history. As newcomers enter a new environment, they undergo a series of experiences and make sense of the original context. Dimensions of socialization correspond to different domains. The learning happens during and right after this transfer (Bauer et al., 1998). In various instances, the amount of knowledge required could be very different, depending on the properties and the familiarity of the new environment. For example, someone assuming a new role in a new social context might be someone changing her/his job in the same organization, or going to a similar position in a similar organization, or a different job in another organization (Ashford & Taylor, 1990; Bauer et al., 1998). Thus, an expatriate's adjustment to a new country to perform a very similar job with very similar work content could be more comfortable than others. Furthermore, for an expatriate having received some formal or informal pre-departure training along different socialization dimensions, the adjustment could be more effortless.

Hence, we argue that getting advice, assistance, and knowledge from other professionals from the same home country and who are/were in the same post makes adjustment easier for diplomats. We suggest that pre-departure training programs also facilitate the adjustment. Furthermore, as the work environment and job content are relatively stable across different locations for this profession, it contributes to the ease of socialization for diplomats. Socialization is a precursor of adjustment (Ashforth, Sluss & Saks, 2007; Saks, Gruman & Cooper-Thomas, 2011). Therefore, these factors facilitate the adjustment of diplomats to their work (i.e., comfort with the diplomatic job) and their interactions (i.e., comfort in interacting with locals). It also helps for their general adjustment (i.e., comfort with the country's available environment of the diplomatic mission).

Method

Foreign ministries, embassies, and diplomatic missions are hard-to-penetrate organizations for research purposes. This nature may be one of the critical reasons for the lack of studies done with diplomatic staff on expatriation issues. We could conduct our three-stage research by accessing a compassionate and relatively closed organization, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MFA) of Turkey, through a diplomat contact. We were well-known and trusted for our integrity and ethical approach. We were introduced to the Personnel Department and granted our research access. While we used qualitative and quantitative methods within our three-stage design, our research primarily has a qualitative orientation for theory development. We explored the diplomats' expatriation issues with interviews at the first stage. We performed a survey as a quantitative second stage to augment our study to validate some comments and questions on the role of pre-departure training. Finally, as a qualitative third stage, we organized focus groups to discuss and interpret our conclusions from the first and the second stages to elaborate on our results. For a general description of the ordering of our methodological steps, please see Figure 1.

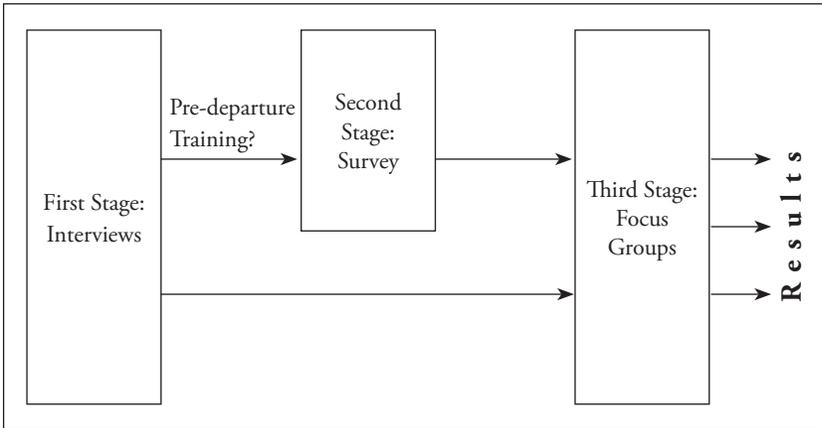


Figure 1. Methodological Structure

First stage: Interviews

The exploratory early stage's primary goal was to understand diplomats' adjustment process on their international assignments. For this aim, we conducted ten semi-structured in-depth interviews with diplomats at the Turkish MFA (for the interview guide, see Appendix 1).

We had two main foci: first, understanding how diplomats prepare for their international assignments and the employer organization's position during this phase, and second, the adjustment process in three facets as reported in the literature, i.e., work, relational, and general adjustment (Black, 1988). We had selected the interviewees based on significant criteria (Miles & Huberman, 1994) that they should first be diplomats⁽²⁾. Secondly, they should have gone through MFA's pre-departure training program. We had used the second criterion to ensure that the interviewees worked in the MFA for at least two years and had gone through informal and formal organizational socialization. We had initially approached a few people who fulfilled these criteria through our contacts in the MFA. Those who were interested either participated or introduced us to their colleagues.

(2) There are other types of employees at MFA and foreign offices, i.e. headquarters staff, administrative officers, technical and other professional staff (e.g. law, architecture, etc.), who do not go on international assignments regularly as a part of their career.

Additionally, we interviewed the administrators to gain further insight into organizational support. We mainly focused on the pre-departure training program and other socialization means that might prepare the diplomats for smooth adjustment for overseas assignments. Heads of the Personnel Department, Training Department, and the 'Academy' Program of the MFA were experienced diplomats who had been through similar socialization and regular international assignments. In the end, we were able to collect data from ten people as a criterion-based purposive snowball sample.

The first author had conducted interviews in Turkish, the native language of both the respondents and the researchers. She recorded and transcribed half of them verbatim. She took detailed notes for five interviews when the respondents did not want to be recorded. The transcriptions and notes were also content analyzed and coded. The content analysis was done with open coding by the first author and an external expert from the human resources field. Both coders coded the data independently and discussed their coding until they reach an agreement. When both coders could not reach an agreement, they consulted a third-domain expert on limited occasions.

In the first stage, it was also possible to make extensive observations and access documents. The interviews were conducted in four different locations, comprising the headquarters and the separate MFA training department, and two overseas missions. These visits provided ample opportunities to observe the formal work and social environment at prominent domestic and international assignment locations. Thorough field notes were recorded and coded to supplement the data collected in the interviews. Additionally, copies of training curricula, materials, circulars, various forms, and 'Post Reports', which are not strictly confidential but not usually available to outside parties, were provided. These documents were also content analyzed with the interviews, used while preparing the interview questions in the first stage and the survey questions in the second stage. In sum, we collected extensive primary and secondary data in the exploratory phase, which formed the ground for the next step, where we applied a quantitative approach.

Second Stage: Survey

The second stage's goal has been to investigate the model developed in the first stage. The model describes how pre-departure training relates to expatriate ad-

justment and whether prior international experience moderates this relationship. This stage explicitly questions the role of anticipatory adjustment, i.e., pre-departure training, previous experiences, and self-preparation, as individual factors creating expectations with a broader MFA sample.

For this purpose, we developed a survey that comprises person and organization-specific questions, questions about the pre-departure training, experience, and perceptions about the specific post. The survey also includes an adapted version of Black & Stephens' (1989) construct in Turkish that measures expatriates' self-estimated international adjustment level. The items from Black & Stephens' construct were translated into Turkish by the first author, checked by experts, and then re-translated back to English by another expert to ensure validity. The original questionnaire is presented in Appendix 2, and the respective measures are explained below.

The following list summarizes the measures used in the questionnaire:

1. Level of international experience: We asked respondents to evaluate and report their prior job-related international experience as expatriates or short-term assignments.

- **Expatriate experience:** Two questions were asked to learn the number of times respondents had been to overseas assignments, names of each country, and periods. These questions were to investigate the potentially moderating relationship between the number of prior overseas terms with the perceived usefulness of the pre-departure training and the adjustment.
- **Other international experience:** We asked two questions to measure this. The first question asked whether the respondent had been sent abroad by the MFA before her/his first long-term overseas assignment. These experiences might be for training and development purposes, short-term temporary projects. If yes, the number of times of such occurrences. The second question asked the purpose(s), number of times, and the duration of any other personal international experience(s). Black & Stephens (1989) investigated the possible connection between previous international experience and adjustment through these questions.

2. Quality of pre-departure training: We asked the respondents to select the courses they had taken in the MFA's pre-departure training program. The

respondents were asked to select courses from a list provided, gathered in the first stage from the document analysis. Then in two separate questions, they were asked to evaluate them in terms of structure and content, and usefulness for their overseas assignments on a 5-point (1 = Very bad, 5 = Very good) and a 4-point (1 = Not useful at all, 4 = Very useful) Likert scale, respectively. We have included these questions to investigate the relationship between the perceived quality and effectiveness of the pre-departure training and its relationship to the adjustment. The 4-point Likert scale, in this question and a few other instances, was used to avoid respondents make an automatic neutral answer, which people tend to choose. We also asked whether the person had any self-preparation and, if yes, to select which ones from a list.

3. Degree of assignment-related perceptions: We asked the respondents to evaluate and report their perceptions before and at the beginning of their first expatriate assignment.

- **Adequacy:** We asked the respondents to evaluate their adequacy feeling before their international assignment (1 = not adequate at all, 4 = entirely adequate) on a 4-point Likert scale.
- **Difficulty:** We asked the respondents to evaluate their perceptions of experienced difficulty at the beginning of their international assignment for being in a different culture and country (1 = Experienced many problems, 4 = Experienced no problems at all) on a 4-point Likert scale.

4. Expatriate Adjustment: Respondents' self-estimated level of international adjustment was measured using the 14 items taken from Black & Stephens' construct (1989). On a 5-point Likert scale (1 = Not adjusted at all, 5 = Completely adjusted), they were asked to indicate the degree of their adjustment during their first international assignment to the general environment (7 items), interaction with host-country nationals (4 items), and adjustment to work (3 items).

We used the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) for Windows to analyze the data collected. We performed factor analyses for adjustment and employed bivariate correlation analysis to investigate their relationships. We also asked the demographic variables to describe the characteristics of the respondents.

We employed criterion-based sampling also at this stage, considering two more criteria. In addition to being a diplomat and having gone through the MFA's formal pre-departure training program, we looked for expatriation at least once and being at the headquarters during our survey period. These criteria left us with an original sample size of 78, according to the list of eligible diplomats provided by the Personnel Department of the MFA. Later, we reduced the initial sample size to 68 due to those who had left the MFA during our survey period.

The first author personally distributed questionnaires to the respondents in the MFA in a week. While delivering the survey, the researcher provided a short introduction orally, reiterating the written introduction given on the forms. Any additional questions and concerns were clarified, particularly about the researcher's independence from the MFA's administration at the time. The researcher collected the completed questionnaires, usually the same or the next day. Some respondents required that the researcher read them the questions and filled in their answers. Therefore a few informants completed their surveys as structured interviews.

Third Stage: Focus Groups

In the final stage of the study, we held four focus groups with diplomats to explore the results of our interviews and survey findings. We performed this step to interpret our results with knowledgeable people from the research field, validate our model, and discuss our topic with the informants in detail.

The focus groups involved diplomats only and took place in informal settings. After the standard description of the study's purpose and nature, the participants attended the focus group meetings of their own will. The first author led all four groups, using the same set of questions, probing when necessary with additional ones. There were 6 to 10 participants in each, which lasted around one and a half hours on average. We taped the focus groups with the consent of the participants and took extensive notes. Recordings were content analyzed from the tapes, while we transcribed only excerpts. The content analysis approach was similar to the first stage. We applied open coding by the first author and the same external expert. Both coded the data independently and discussed their coding until reaching an agreement. The agreements did not require a third expert at this stage.

Results

First Stage: Interviews

In this stage, we focused on understanding how diplomats prepare for their international assignments and the employer organization's role during this preparation. Firstly, our results indicate that informants did not highly appraise the extant pre-departure training program for work-related purposes. Especially junior diplomats complained about the length and content of the courses provided; for instance:

“I did not benefit from these courses at all on my first assignment. There was no language training then, so I went away without any language knowledge. I had to do all the administrative and financial work myself when the chief of mission was unexpectedly called back to Turkey. He used to do all the financial and administrative work himself. For this reason, none of the administrative officers knew how to do them. I had to sit down and learn everything by looking at previous years' books, which took a lot of time and effort.” (Interviewee 6)

They have also indicated that they would have highly appreciated a proper pre-departure (cross-cultural) training program. The respondents also mentioned that such a program would be most helpful if performed between the first and second international assignments. The existing program did not have any culture-specific purpose related to cross-cultural interactions. For instance:

“The protocol course was concise, and we were not taught much about the rules of behavior in diplomatic protocol. I realized that when I went on my first assignment abroad. For instance, I did not know how to invite diplomatic members from other countries for dinner. I learned these kinds of rules and correct ways of behavior from my colleagues in the mission, and sometimes by trial and error.” (Interviewee 4)

For culture-specific purposes, the practice called 'Post Report' intends to provide specific information about posts in a prospective country, including its culture. Post reports are prepared annually by each mission abroad and provide general knowledge about the country for the personnel sent there. They usually include information on history, geography, demographics, language, economy,

currency, food, climate, security, and other daily life issues. 'Post Reports' can be considered a type of didactic-informational training. A significant problem with this tool is that the content is not standardized, so it depends entirely on the person who prepares it and his/her experiences. One respondent noted that his destination's specific Post Report included no information about accommodation for families, schools for children, and spouses' job opportunities. The lack of standard⁽³⁾ and sufficient information in the Post Reports was a problem:

"People adapt to their new environment, both daily life and office work, even without such knowledge. It might be much quicker and easier if as much information as possible would be present in the Post Reports." (Interviewee 1)

Another highly appreciated but still rare practice was about the MFA's short-term international experience opportunities before the first long-term assignment.

"During the two years that we serve at the headquarters at the initial stage of our careers, it would be much better if we would gain some familiarity abroad with foreign exposure. Such a practice would be essential because some of us are assigned abroad for several years without any prior international experience!" (Interviewee 3)

Interviewees noted that having opportunities to participate in various professional occasions (e.g., international summits, bilateral talks) were helpful for the personal and professional development of junior diplomats:

"International experience is better when it is combined with active involvement. In my opinion, junior diplomats should be sent abroad before their first overseas assignments. Moreover, they can be sent as participants, for example, to the General Assembly of the United Nations, which is held every year in September. As diplomats from all over the world meet there, this would be an excellent experience for young diplomats at the beginning of their careers. Gaining professional experience by participating is even more important than only 'being' abroad." (Interviewee 9)

(3) Post reports have later been standardized in terms of sub-headings included.

The above quote found its support in the following experience by a junior one:

“I was sent to one of the former Soviet Union Republics for a temporary post of three months. There were only the Ambassador and me at the mission. I even had to stay on my own when he left temporarily, acting as Charge de’ affairs ad interim. I had to learn many things necessary for overseas assignments in general and the specifics of working as a diplomat during this temporary assignment. There had also been an official visit by the Minister while I was there, making things even more hectic. The period was an invaluable training experience for my career, although a tough one. It was like throwing a baby into the water, exercising a ‘swim or drown’ practice! I thoroughly believe that experiential learning is essential for diplomacy, and it is best gained through working abroad.” (Interviewee 8)

In short, concerning our first focus, we gathered significant evidence that the informants considered the MFA’s pre-departure training as rather partial and mostly ineffective for work adjustment. Therefore, interviewees suggested they would appreciate more systematic training. However, the interviewees also expressed high perceived work adjustment levels, a contradictory finding, given their opinions about the pre-departure training.

Secondly, concerning the general adjustment, the interviewees voiced a need for receiving help and support from the MFA before and during the initial stages of actual relocations through an organizational assistance system, which was entirely lacking. While such assistance systems are a part of expatriate management in MNEs, there was no similar institutional assistance for diplomats. They need logistic help to arrange international travels, move, find accommodation, make school arrangements for children and job arrangements for spouses, and other legal and practical procedures involved in an international relocation. However, different from the usual practice in MNEs, there is a common tradition of helping newcomers to the overseas missions in every possible way. The following quote provides a typical account of shared experiences by the respondents:

“I was met by a colleague at the airport of [name of the city] where I had to stay overnight and continue my journey the next day. A colleague had already arranged a room for my stay that night, and another colleague took me out for

dinner. They gave me a ride to the airport the next day, and I met another colleague in the city of my mission. The mission chief had found some possible flats for me to look at, and another colleague welcomed me to stay at his place until I found a flat for myself. Co-workers at the Embassy took me out to eat and to show me around. At the Embassy, I was helped learn the functioning of the mission and introduced to other foreign diplomatic members on every possible occasion.”
(Interviewee 2)

Interviewees expressed low levels of difficulty in general adjustment albeit with no institutional assistance or minimal pre-departure training, mostly as a result of support from colleagues who were at the mission during or before:

“I phoned the person whom I was going to replace and asked him all sorts of questions. The country is just out of the war, so as you might understand, I am additionally anxious about the daily life conditions there. My questions were ranging from finding food to communication facilities, in addition to more standard issues that everyone going on an international assignment considers, like finding a flat and transportation of my belongings, not to mention myself and my cat! He helped me a lot by giving me a lot of information. Getting answers to my questions about the conditions there eased my worries considerably.”
(Interviewee 7)

Concerning work adjustment, there was deep-seated socialization among the MFA members, starting as soon as junior diplomats begin their careers. It was planted formally through the ‘Academy’ program and further continued informally with on-the-job training regarding various aspects of the diplomatic profession. Some respondents were not in favor of classroom training for specific subjects and argued strongly for on-the-job training:

“The diplomatic negotiation course gives general knowledge about the issue, and therefore it is useful. However, what is really important for bilateral and multi-lateral talks when assigned abroad is what a young diplomat has learned from his/her supervisors during the two years at the headquarters. S/he should grasp related skills there and then develop them by the practice during overseas assignments. This approach is the only way to learn negotiation. Even if we give formal negotiation courses, one can only learn this subject by experience. One develops the necessary negotiation knowledge at the headquarters; however, skills are de-

veloped by experience and practice in a few years during overseas assignments. If the importance of theoretical training is, for example, 70% in gaining negotiation skills, the importance of learning from seniors and experience is 1000%!” (Interviewee 5)

In support of the same view, another diplomat proposed that:

“The majority of young diplomats have already been taught the necessary theoretical knowledge in the university before the MFA. How much more will one learn if s/he has not already learned there? In my opinion, we should give more on-the-job training to young diplomats, rather than wasting time on theory.” (Interviewee 10)

As we reported in the methods section, we analyzed and openly coded the interview transcriptions and other archival materials. According to this coding, we developed first-order concepts, second-order themes, and aggregate dimensions (Carspecken, 1996; Gioia, Corley, and Hamilton, 2012) (See Table 1).

Table 1. First-order Concepts, Second-order Themes, and Aggregate Dimensions

First-order concepts	Second-order themes	Aggregate dimensions
Cultural awareness in the training content.	Cultural orientation	Predeparture training quality
Cross-cultural skills attained with training.		
Self-preparation as a training method with readings, exercises.	Training method	
Structured preparation with a defined program.		
Expatriation experience before the specific post.	Needs-based training	
Other international experience before the specific post.		
The difficulty of the post according to common knowledge.		
The feeling of (in)adequacy and challenge about the post.	Adjustment to the general environment	
Task-similarity with prior professional tasks performed.		
The strong influence of the home country emphasis in every post.	Adjustment to the work environment	Expatriate adjustment
Task-similarity with prior professional tasks performed.		
The strong influence of the home country emphasis in every post.		
The compulsory nature and the expectation to expatriate before the post assignment.		
Adjustment to the cultural context of the post	Adjustment to cultural interactions	
Adjustment to work interactions with HCNs		
Adjustment to daily interactions with HCNs	Adjustment to the financial environment	
Adjustment to local prices and costs		
Adjustment to income and currency differences	Socialization to the host country	
Working with HCNs		
Developing relations with HCNs		
Understanding the norms of the host country	Professional Fit	Professional Socialization
Suitability to the diplomatic profession		
Suitability to expatriation		
Adaptability to diverse conditions at the host country	Professional Bonding	
Mutual professional development at the post		
Feeling trust due to common profession	Prior Professional Socialization	
Supporting other professionals		
Knowing people from earlier contact		
Knowing people outside the office	Prior Professional Socialization	
Common schools or earlier group membership		

In summary, we understood that the MFA diplomats did not seem to feel much difficulty adjusting to living and working in a foreign environment on their international assignments. This finding was intriguing. The same interviewees claimed that pre-departure training and assistance were relatively low in quality and quantity. Based on our reading of the prior literature (Kolb,1984; Kolb, Boyatzis, & Mainemelis, 2001; Papademetriou, 2015) and our findings in the first stage, we framed a model. The model suggests while the quality of pre-departure training contributes to expatriates’ adjustment, expatriates’ assignment-related perceptions and prior international experience moderates the relationship (see Figure 2). In the second stage, we surveyed a larger sample to investigate this model further.

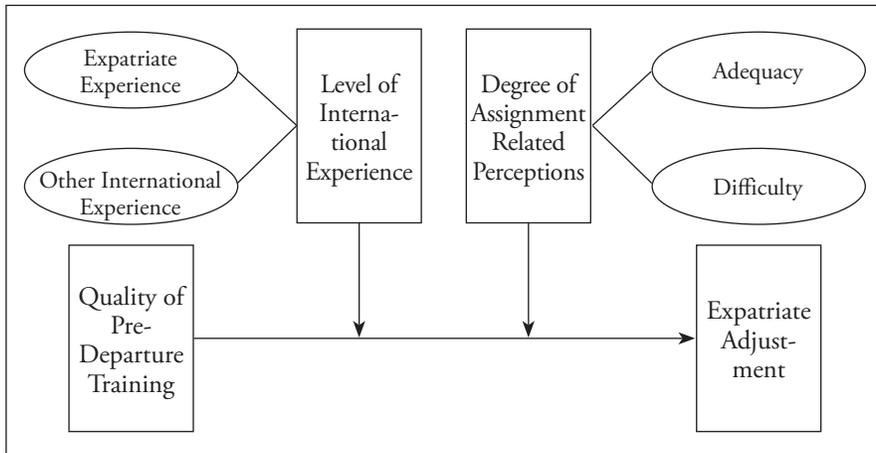


Figure 2. Pre-departure Training, Experience, and the Perceptions in the Expatriate Adjustment of Diplomats

Second stage: Survey

At the survey stage, the number of useable questionnaires was 60 (response rate 88%). Table 2 provides a summary of the demographic details of the respondents. The sample is statistically representative of the population’s gender distribution, 81% male to 19% female at the survey time. The respondents’ distribution concerning age, seniority, and the number of international assignments reflects the criteria used in selecting the sample.

Table 2. Sample Demographics (N = 60)

Variables		(%)	Variables		(%)
Gender	Male	75	No of years in the MFA	6-11	42
	Female	25		12-18	32
Age	30-35	45		19 & over	26
	36-41	28	No of international assignments	2	58
	42-50	22		3	30
	51 & over	5		4 & more	12

The informants did not evaluate the pre-departure training very highly in the survey (Table 3), like the first stage findings. The courses were considered less than “good” in structure and content (3.63 / 5.00) and perceived usefulness (2.68 / 4.00).

Table 3. Evaluations of Pre-departure Training (N = 60)

Courses	Structure & content		Perceived usefulness	
	Mean	SD	Mean	SD
Methods & security of correspondence	3.80	1.078	2.85	1.073
How to confront intelligence & security	3.58	0.964	2.70	0.975
Administrative & financial issues	3.51	1.096	2.50	1.093

The findings of the survey about self-evaluations (See Table 4) showed that diplomats felt adequate even before their first international assignment (3.17 / 4.00) and experienced almost no difficulty (1.42 / 4.00). This finding was a significant result of the second stage of the study. We did not expect to see such a high level of perceived adequacy and a low level of difficulties experienced, despite not having received much and highly-regarded pre-departure training.

Table 4. Self-evaluations Concerning the First International Assignments (N = 60)

	Work before and during the first international assignment	
	Perceived adequacy before	Difficulty experienced during
Mean (SD)	3.17 (0.76)	1.42 (0.59)

The first international assignments' level of adjustment was also generally very high (See Table 5). Diplomats stated the highest adjustment to work (items 12, 13, & 14), with the lowest standard deviations. General adjustment (items 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, & 7⁽⁴⁾), while still relatively high in general, seem to be evaluated closer to medium levels. We have observed the lowest adjustment levels in interaction with host-country nationals (HCNs) (items 8, 9, 10, & 11). However, even the lowest item on their list (item 8, socializing with HCNs) is over average, i.e., 3.00 out of 5.00.

Table 5. Self-reported Adjustment Levels on International Assignments ($N = 60$)

Adjustment to	Mean	SD
Item 1: General living conditions	4.233	0.91
Item 2: Housing	4.017	1.13
Item 3: Food	4.223	1.09
Item 4: Shopping	4.067	1.15
Item 5: Cost of living	3.367	1.10
Item 6: Entertainment/recreation	3.817	1.30
Item 7: Health care	3.583	1.24
Item 8: Socializing with HCNs	3.283	1.22
Item 9: Interacting with HCNs daily	3.417	1.38
Item 10: Interacting with HCNs outside of work	3.367	1.30
Item 11: Communicating with HCNs	3.467	1.27
Item 12: Specific job responsibilities	4.579	0.63
Item 13: Performance and expectations	4.466	0.57
Item 14: Responsibilities as supervisor / subordinate	4.433	0.74

Similar to the Black and Stephens' (1989) study, we conducted a principal component analysis using Kaiser's criterion to understand the adjustment measures' emerging factor structure. While Black and Stephens (1989) find three fac-

(4) Unlike Black & Stephens' (1989) findings, items 5 & 6 were not included in the general adjustment factor in our research. They formed a separate factor.

tors, i.e., general, interaction, and work adjustment, our results showed the 4th factor (See Table 6). This factor, labeled 'financial adjustment', consisted of Items 5 (cost of living) and 6 (entertainment/recreational facilities and opportunities). We categorized 'entertainment/recreational facilities and opportunities' under the 'financial adaptation' factor. This categorization was due to the argument that a diplomat may not afford entertainment / recreational opportunities even when a host country offers them. Although Item 6 had higher than 0.30 loadings in two other factors, we decided to include it in this new factor. It was never 'clean' in various iterations of principal component analysis using different criteria.

Table 6. Factor Analysis of Overseas Adjustment (with Eigenvalues > 1)

	Factor 1	Factor 2	Factor 3	Factor 4
Item 4	.89896			
Item 3	.89884			
Item 7	.74979			
Item 2	.73575			
Item 1	.73522	.41353		
Item 8		.91269		
Item 10		.91163		
Item 9		.89340		
Item 11		.86505		
Item 14			.95488	
Item 13			.92227	
Item 12			.82810	
Item 5				.89141
Item 6	.47549	.35683		.57902

Note. We reported only the loadings greater than 0.30.

The bivariate correlation analyses between previous international experiences, host country experience, training before overseas assignments, and the four adjustment factors show no statistically significant relationship. Except, we found the general adjustment as negatively related to the host country experience (See Table 7). The survey results brought more questions than answers: how come dip-

lomats experience such a small magnitude of adjustment problems on (especially first) overseas assignments? For some answers, we turn to the findings from the focus groups.

Table 7. Results (N = 60)

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
1. Previous personal experience	1.00							
2. Host country experience	.06 (.65)	1.00						
3. Previous MFA experience	.14 (.31)	-.09 (.50)	1.00					
4. Pre-departure training	.04 (.75)	-.10 (.48)	.01 (.94)	1.00				
5. General adjustment	-.08 (.55)	-.19* (.17)	-.08 (.54)	.05 (.73)	1.00			
6. Interaction adjustment	.05 (.70)	-.05 (.73)	.06 (.65)	.12 (.36)	.02 (.88)	1.00		
7. Work adjustment	.00 (1.00)	-.00 (1.00)	-.03 (.84)	-.05 (.74)	.08 (.56)	.02 (.90)	1.00	
8. Financial adjustment	.03 (.83)	-.06 (.68)	-.11 (.41)	.08 (.58)	.03 (.84)	.01 (.96)	-.03 (.83)	1.00

Notes: p (2-tailed significance) is in parentheses; * < .05

Third Stage: Focus Groups

The findings from the focus groups indicate that Turkish diplomats experience intense professional socialization at the MFA. Most argued that the process starts already in the selection, which chooses people from similar schools and with specific characteristics, searching for a professional fit:

“Even the school diplomats attended are important. They usually come from the same schools because these schools lead people towards being open and research-oriented. Another significant personality characteristic of diplomats is being extraverts. They should be open to learning, willing to improve, and like this profession very much. These are the main factors for being successful. Candidate diplomats go through a difficult selection process. According to their statements

in the written exams, and discussion (negotiation) skills in the oral exams, those who can work overseas are selected.” (Participant M)

The selection process is essential because it is in the definition of the job that *all* diplomats will go on overseas assignments instead of a few managers of MNEs to be expatriates. In the focus groups, diplomats stated that MFA hires people who can succeed in regular overseas assignments. Informants also noted that MFA evaluates candidates based on whether they are fit for the job at their first overseas assignment in a couple of years. The evaluation also involves whether the candidate would develop her/his formation through on-the-job training and experiential learning (*Participant A*). Thus, people showing higher professional fit potential are selected, even if they might not have the highest qualifications or best academic background.

Training on the job is a distinguishing characteristic of professional training in the MFA. Learning from supervisors and peers and practice and experience at the headquarters and overseas assignments is critical for a successful career. The following quote on negotiation exemplifies this argument:

“Especially negotiation is taught through on-the-job training. Even before junior diplomats get their tenure, they attend bilateral conferences with their supervisors. Turkey will sign an agreement with another country: a junior diplomat observes and experiences the whole process. Talks and negotiations can go on for hours on a single word before signing the agreement. While the junior diplomat will most probably not be eligible to have a say among all the senior people in the delegation, s/he watches and practices the actual process. The conference could be overseas. S/he writes a report for the follow-up as well. Therefore, junior diplomat learns a lot while attending the bilateral conference and writing up the follow-up report.” (Participant K)

The intense focus on on-the-job training at the headquarters, leading to professional bonding during the initial years, is essential for their future jobs during overseas assignments. Focus group participants explained that junior diplomats need to acquire the skills and build their formation while working at the headquarters. This period also helps them gain experience working with other MFA diplomats.

Like the survey findings, diplomats in the focus groups indicated high adjustment levels during their first overseas assignments. They explained the high levels of general and work adjustment by several factors:

“I went to [name of the city] for my first overseas assignment. I did not experience any particular difficulties. The existing colleagues in the mission embraced me as soon as I arrived and helped me in my personal and work life. I learned about the particulars of living in this city from them. Such difficulties are experienced by also, say, an engineer working for an MNE. In our case, however, our supervisors and colleagues already working there help us get quickly adapted to the local conditions and work there.” (Participant I)

There are no extensive efforts by the MFA to help diplomats with their general adjustment, such as finding appropriate accommodation, a school for children, and employment for spouses during relocation to an overseas assignment. However, professional bonding and potential prior socialization of the colleagues working in missions help newcomers with all such issues by sharing their knowledge, experience, and social networks. This support is possible because newcomers and current employees are of the same home-country nationals, belonging to the same professional group, with potential earlier socialization or awareness. They all experience the same conditions regularly as they are part of the profession (*Participant L*).

Some participants argued that adapting and adjusting to different cultures is one of the diplomatic profession’s distinctive elements. Therefore, it is up to the specific person to find information on the assigned mission. People who are enthusiastic about their career will do it independently and with pleasure as part of their professional practice.

The participants stated that one source of information once a diplomat learns about his/her next overseas assignment is the country’s diplomatic representation in Turkey. They can also contact colleagues who had worked there before and those currently there. Participants also explained that they start following the correspondence between their assigned mission and the headquarters, focusing on the current and significant issues for that mission. They also track the local (if possible, due to language) and international media on politics, economics, and other significant issues. They read extensively about a country or region before (e.g., the Balkans, the war in Afghanistan, the history of India, Pakistan, and Bangladesh). Self-preparation is a common way of acquiring information for pre-departure preparation, also preparing a diplomat for professional socialization. Using these mechanisms, diplomats prepare themselves for work adjustment for the specifics of the country. The nature of their work in principle

does not change radically between countries (unless in extreme conditions such as wars, natural disasters, and diplomatic crises). Prior knowledge acquisition about the host country also makes socialization easier.

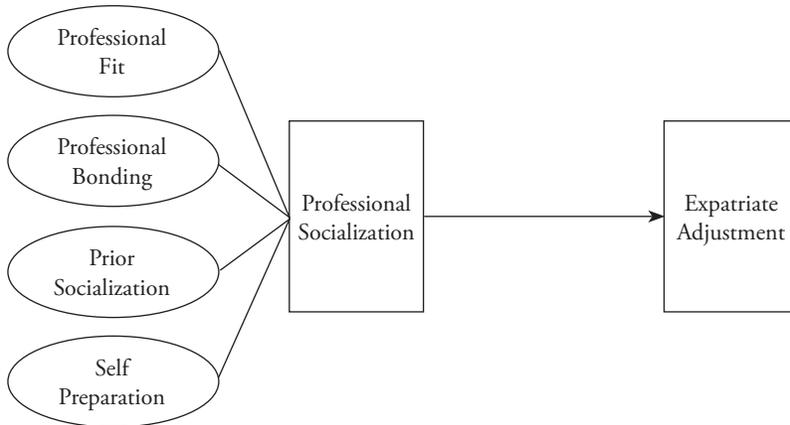


Figure 3. Socialization and Diplomats' Expatriate Adjustment

At the end of this stage, based on the above discussions, we framed a model on socialization and expatriate adjustment (see Figure 3). To summarize, we learned that deep socialization is the most significant factor contributing to low levels of perceived difficulty experienced in international assignments. This socialization extends to both the general adjustment and the work adjustment. The former corresponds to adjusting to everyday life out of work through help and assistance from colleagues who have been in the same place. The latter happens through continuous on-the-job training. Socialization starts with selecting people with a higher potential professional fit and bonding with them for a long career. In a diplomatic career at MFA, socializing with colleagues and self-preparation for international appointments are among professional norms.

Implications for Research and Practice

Diplomats comprise a significant group of expatriates on their own, who deserve more research effort. The ever-growing practitioner community that employs expatriates can benefit from the applications and experiences of diplomatic jobs.

While our results are primarily for diplomats, they may apply to other work settings. For example, they may apply where professional norms are powerful, and expatriates are working in highly centralized or standardized work environments with strong home-country sentiments. As such, our paper has several implications for research and practice.

Theoretical Implications

Our results are intriguing, especially in comparison to the findings of earlier studies on expatriate adjustment. One would expect to find significant adjustment problems in diplomats without proper pre-departure training and a formal orientation program at diverse cultural and contextual settings. However, diplomatic work's uniformity across missions seems to bring a relative immunity to foreignness for diplomats. Based on this result, we advise researchers to study the impact of MNC expatriates' job variety and standardization on their adjustment.

In a similar effort to Black et al.'s (1991), we develop the following model to explain the high adjustment levels we found in our study (see Figure 4). Black et al.'s model regards organizational socialization, among several others, as a considerably less significant element, influencing the mode of adjustment (1991). Our model focuses more specifically on work-related factors: first, the intense professional socialization of diplomats, and second, the familiar nature of the work environment across countries. The third factor in the proposed model is pre-departure preparation. We argue that these factors impact the levels of expatriate adjustment. Among these factors, we posit that professional socialization is the most significant element for expatriate adjustment, creating an enabling environment. Hence, we put different forms of socialization at the center of our analysis. Individual characteristics, prior socialization, and training are fundamental socialization factors in the host country, leading to (higher) adjustment. As such, our research can be considered an extension of the Social Learning Theory approach to expatriate adjustment (Black and Mendenhall, 1990).

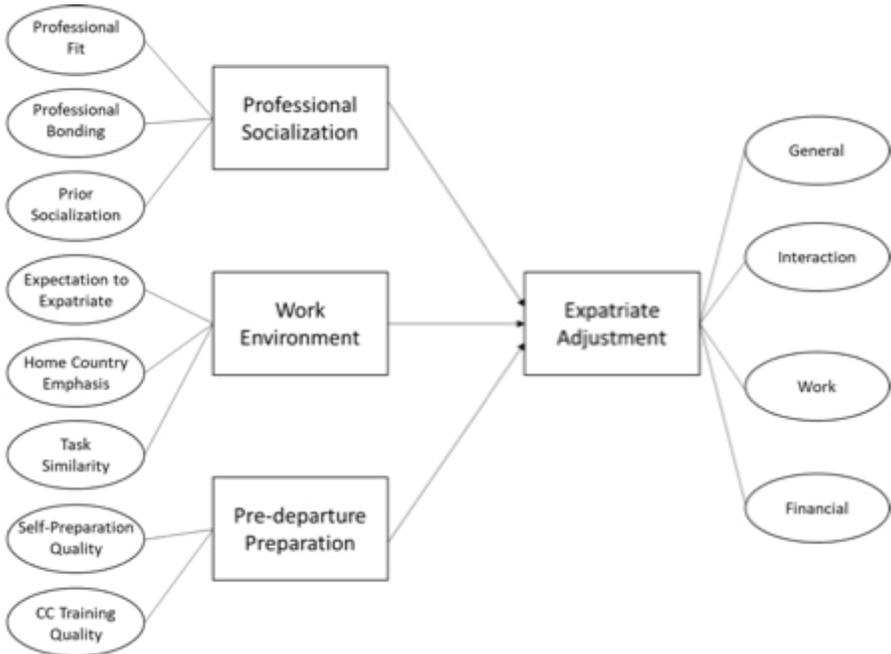


Figure 4. The Model of Expatriate Adjustment in Highly Professionalized Fields

Professions and Expatriate Adjustment

Apart from MNE expatriates, different professions are studied less frequently in expatriate adjustment literature. Academics and teachers are also relatively more common; however, studies on expatriate adjustment of diplomats are rare. While expatriates are mostly professionals going abroad, their profession's impact on their adjustment is not well addressed in the literature. Our research is among the early attempts describing how different professions have distinctive adjustment mechanisms. We recommend several variables regarding professions and expatriate adjustment of professionals: professional fit, professional bonding, and prior socialization due to professional relationships, the expectation to expatriate in the specific profession, home country emphasis, and task similarity across locations.

Professional Fit

The hiring process considers candidates for the diplomatic profession. It includes an assessment of candidates' suitability for regular expatriation. Therefore, indi-

vidual characteristics, mainly fitness for expatriation, should be considered part of the selection process for better adjustment. This argument is parallel to organization factors in Black et al.'s (1991) model. They propose that expatriates' selection criteria incorporate a wide range of other relevant factors, including adaptability to overseas assignments. While researchers studied employee selection for expatriation, the impact of professions on expatriate careers is rarely studied.

Professional Bonding

Diplomats go through intense socialization and on-the-job training that starts as soon as they begin their professional careers. Learning the 'rules of the game' as a part of their professional bonding contributes significantly to their expatriate adjustment. Accordingly, we suggest an organizational effort (e.g., buddy or mentor programs), particularly for potential expatriates, so that expatriates' professional socialization will start early. Like the concept of professional fit, we need more studies to understand the impact of professions, and the variables like professional bonding, and expatriate adjustment, as there are minimal studies in this area.

Prior Socialization

Diplomats are generally members of smaller communities. They might work with home-country nationals they already know and have worked with previously wherever they go. Prior socialization with at least some of the other diplomats at the same overseas assignment positively influences expatriate adjustment. Therefore, introducing potential expatriates to those with whom they might work in different countries is also suggested to help expatriates build substantial work (and social) relations.

Black et al. (1991:311) also included organizational socialization factors in their model, focusing on institutional and individual socialization tactics and their influence on role innovation. However, our argument is different. We claim that formal as well as informal socialization at work improve expatriate adjustment.

Secondly, in our proposed model, the work environment is also critical for expatriate adjustment. The model suggests the expectation to expatriate, home-country emphasis, and task similarity contribute extensively to adjustment.

The Expectation to Expatriate

Expatriation has always been a regular part of diplomatic careers; it is a part of their formal job definition and the informal psychological contract. Therefore, the diplomatic work environment is supportive of expatriation. We suggest that organizations deliberately provide a similar approach. We argue that making expatriation a common characteristic of at least specific careers will help with the successful adjustment process.

Home-country Emphasis

Unlike expatriates in MNEs, diplomats of the same nationality are usually the majority in their overseas missions. HCNs remain as the minority⁽⁵⁾. Therefore, diplomats in general work with colleagues of their nationality at the office on international assignments, talking their native language and turning their workplaces into replicas of their home-country work environments. While we acknowledge that every organizational setting cannot include this aspect, it is essential to facilitate the overseas adjustment.

Task Similarity

Diplomats' occupation is somewhat structured and defined with some strict norms, values, and roles. They usually do not need to spend too much time learning about work variations in a particular country. When on international assignments, diplomats work with similar standards and shared organizational and national values, belief systems, language, and jargon. They perform similar tasks strongly tied up with the headquarters, almost regardless of their diplomatic post and host-country context. As such, we suggest that substantial task similarity assists successful expatriate adjustment.

Expatriate Preparation

Pre-departure training provided by the organization is fundamentally weak in our example. However, diplomats' strong suggestion for CCT and self-preparation programs represent another crucial aspect for better expatriate adjustment. This part of our model is an extension of Black et al. (1991:305), the 'anticipatory adjustment' in their model. We derived the idea from domestic adjustment

(5) Third-country nationals (TCNs) can be found in supranational organizations, like the UN, which also have diplomatic status in the host countries.

literature. The basic assumption behind it is that the actual adjustment will be more comfortable and quicker if expatriates make anticipatory adjustments. We include one institutional (i.e., CCT) and one individual (i.e., self-preparation) aspect within this aspect of our model.

Cross-cultural Training

Like the extant literature, our study reports the importance and relevance of CCT for developing an understanding and awareness of interactions across different cultures. Therefore, we suggest well-developed and regularly implemented CCT programs to improve expatriate adjustment. Such a program needs to consider expatriates' various needs and apply multiple techniques for different learning styles, focusing on the content and delivery.

Self-preparation

Diplomats prepare themselves for a new post by contacting colleagues who had worked in the same place and receive their recommendations. This practice and other forms of self-paced training seem to contribute significantly to the expatriate adjustment of diplomats. Potential expatriates need to be 'taught' appropriate ways to prepare themselves and their families for assignments to increase the probability of a successful adjustment.

We argue that the above factors contribute jointly to the three facets of expatriate adjustment, i.e., general, interaction, and work. Our study also identifies 'financial adjustment' as a relevant aspect. This aspect consists of the "cost of living" and "entertainment/recreational facilities and opportunities." This factor negatively contributes to the self-preparation of diplomats. MNEs' expatriates usually have considerable additional financial benefits; hence financial adjustment is probably not an issue for this group. However, financial adjustment can be a significant issue for expatriates originating from developing and less-developed countries. It might also present a significant issue for expatriates of other non-MNE organizations (e.g., international NGOs). Salary adjustments and additional benefits of expatriation are either limited or not available in these organizations, despite the potentially higher living costs. For such groups, the financial adjustment facet should be acknowledged openly by the organizations, and expatriates need to be aware of it. The elements of our model contribute to this specific adjustment facet.

Limitations and Future Research

The expatriate literature can benefit from the findings of our research and our resulting models. However, further research is needed to test the proposed models. Our study does not include a statistical validation of them. Also, our survey responses include self-reports of the respondents and have significant limitations. Nonetheless, the practitioner and academic communities may benefit from this model to explain expatriates' adjustment with strongly defined professions, especially in non-MNE settings.

There are some significant differences between expatriates of MNEs and diplomats. Despite the ongoing significance of expatriation, also in newer forms such as self-initiated and footloose expatriates, it is still not a regular part of managerial careers. As such, expatriate managers remain in the minority in their respective MNEs. When they are on international assignments, they represent a (usually negligible) minority in their overseas organizational settings. Therefore, parts of our model may not apply to the broader expatriate community.

Another limitation of our research is controlling the variance due to the specific host country. For instance, Varma et al. (2016) have highlighted the concept of cultural similarity in HCNs approach and reaction to expatriates. They have found that being from a similar culture and holding a supervisory position were positively influential in categorizing expatriates as in-group members in Turkey. The literature also reveals that Turkish HCNs would be more likely to perceive an expatriate from India as an in-group as opposed to one from the USA due to cultural similarity (House et al., 2004). Therefore, the cultural similarity between the expatriate's home and the host country may influence the expatriate adjustment process. In our study, we could not control or test these variables due to data limitations. Each country's counts for diplomatic assignments would be minimal. Hence, accessing such data in higher volumes in diplomatic environments is problematic. However, we recommend researchers address cultural similarity and expatriate assignment issues in more detail if they could solve the data availability problem. For instance, the adjustment process would most probably be different for developing country expatriates to developed HCNs or developing HCNs.

We emphasize that expatriate adjustment is a multidimensional construct encompassing adjustment to the general environment, adjusting to the work situation, and adjusting to the interaction with the HCNs. The adjustment to interacting with the HCNs in the case of diplomats involves the HCNs in foreign

missions. These people have most of the first interactions with the expatriates and guide them in the host countries' culture and conventions. As such, they positively impact expatriates' overall experience (e.g., Arman & Aycan, 2013). Further research is needed that differentiates HCNs at the workplace and other social support resources, such as home country nationals and other expatriates. Due to the missions' unique nature, other expatriates are naturally home country nationals. No third-country nationals were present in these workplaces. However, types of support emerging from these groups may have differential impacts on the expatriates' adjustment process. In this regard, the cross-border nature of expatriates' social networks deserves further research (Ballesteros-Leiva et al., 2017; Mao & Shen, 2015).

Further research would also be relevant about the impact of expatriation dominance in the diplomats' profession. It may enrich our understanding of increasingly global MNEs, where expatriation is becoming the norm. Although new research articles appear about diplomats and their spouses' expatriation (e.g., Gudmundsdottir, Gudlaugsson & Adalsteinsson, 2019), the literature involves minimum work in this area.

In this paper, we have highlighted our objective to examine work-related antecedents of the expatriate adjustment process. However, we could not cover all the factors referring to the professional role, such as job level, role discretion, and role clarity, which might be of interest (Puck, Holtbrügge & Raupp, 2017). As Zhang and Oczkowski (2016) elaborate, an individual's job position may reinforce the perception of power bases, according to the power distance theory (Carson et al., 1993; Hofstede, 2001; Schwartz, 2006). This reinforcement may then influence adjustment and performance at work (Caligiuri & Cascio, 1998). In other words, expatriates at higher positions are more likely to have managerial discretion and greater autonomy. Therefore, their adjustment process may be affected in their empirical setting. Researchers can study different work-related antecedents in the future.

Practical Implications

Our findings have several managerial implications for both businesses and non-profit organizations with regular international assignments.

First, it is essential to understand that employees' characteristics, mostly fitness for expatriation, are necessary for successful adjustment. Therefore, internal

or external selection for expatriate positions should consider candidates' suitability for international assignments.

Second, organizations can develop institutional buddy or mentor programs for potential expatriate positions for robust professional bonding, which is a significant step towards early professional socialization. In a similar vein, organizational efforts to introduce (likely or previous) expatriates who might work together in the future may enhance expatriates' adjustment. These efforts might help them build stronger relations both in work and social contexts, i.e., formal and informal socialization, improving adjustment.

Third, organizations can benefit from managing employees' expectations to expatriate: they can make expatriation (at least for related jobs) a 'normal' part of individual careers. This redefinition of careers expected to contribute to the adjustment process.

Fourth, in international assignments that include jobs comprising similar tasks, skills, knowledge, and experience, managers may deliberately choose the people with the existing set for better adjustment.

Fifth, regular, carefully developed, and individualized CCT programs help expatriates adjust. We recommend designing these programs according to the diverse expatriation-related needs and using different methods to accommodate various learning styles. This recommendation does not implicitly suggest overlooking self-preparation, which is a crucial aspect of successful adjustment.

Sixth, we suggest that organizations need to systematize to 'teach' potential expatriates how to do it for themselves (and their families, if involved). The last implication concerns mainly non-profit organizations where financial adjustment can be a significant issue. Their managers need to think about this aspect specifically and find ways of preparing their expatriates by addressing it openly in their pre-departure preparation.

Conclusion

We believe our study opens the path to more diverse studies that consider different combinations for expatriates' home countries and host countries. Researchers need to take work-related antecedents of the expatriate adjustment process and the cultural context more seriously. We also trust our results apply to various

parts of the world, rather than strictly to developed country perspective research articles. While the impact of studying this phenomenon in a developing country is not visible in our theorizing, we had considered it in our selection of research problems and research approach.

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Appendix 1. Interview Guide

- Could you walk me through your career in the MFA so far?
- Have you got any international experience before joining the MFA?
- Have you been sent on a short-term, temporary international assignment before your first proper one?
- Could you tell me about your current job?
 - Where is your job?
 - What is your role?
 - What responsibilities do you have?
 - How is your day-to-day life?
- Think about your first international assignment. How did you adjust to the host country?
 - How was living there?
 - How was the local food and availability of alternatives?
 - How was the shopping in the host country?
 - How were the costs of living?
 - How were the services like health, education?
 - How were the local people outside the mission?
 - How were the local people working at the mission?
 - How was your job in the host country?
 - Have you had a spouse and/or children with you? What kind of problems have they experienced, if any?
- How would you describe your preparation before going to your first foreign country position?
 - What did you do?
 - How did you do that?
 - What was the goal/purpose?
 - How did you like its result?
- (If not mentioned above) Have you been involved in any training or structured preparation program by the MFA before you go?
 - (If yes) How was the program?

Appendix 2. Survey Questions

1. Yaşınız:
2. Cinsiyetiniz:
 - Kadın
 - Erkek
3. Dışişleri Bakanlığı'ndaki toplam çalışma süreniz:
4. Kaç kez yurtdışı tayine gittiniz?
5. Yurtdışı tayin(ler)inizde hangi ülkeye / ülkelere gittiğinizi ve her birinde ne kadar kaldığınızı belirtiniz.

	Ülke	Süre
1. Tayin		
2. Tayin		
3. Tayin		

6. İlk yurtdışı tayininizden önce, Bakanlık tarafından eğitim için ve/ya görevli olarak kaç kez yurtdışına gönderildiniz?
7. Bakanlık tarafından gönderildikleriniz dışında, hangi amaçlarla ve yaklaşık olarak ne kadar süreyle yurtdışında bulunmuştunuz? Lütfen size uygun olan tüm seçenekleri işaretleyiniz.

	Kaç kez	Süre
Turistik		
Eğitim		
Anne/Baba görevinden dolayı		
Diğer (lütfen belirtiniz)		

8. İlk yurtdışı tayininize gitmeden önce, Bakanlık tarafından düzenlenen ilk kez yurtdışı görevlere atanan meslek memurları için eğitim programına katıldınız mı?
 - EVET (Lütfen 9. soruya gidiniz)
 - HAYIR (Lütfen 12. soruya gidiniz)

9. Bu program çerçevesinde aşağıdaki kurslardan hangilerine mevcuttu?

- Haberleşme Usul ve Güvenliği kursu
- İstihbarat, İstihbarat Karşı Koyma ve Güvenlik kursu
- İdari ve Mali İşler kursu
- Yabancı dil kursu
- Gidilecek Ülke Hakkında Eğitim vermek amaçlı kurs
- Genel olarak yabancı bir ülkede ve kültürde yaşamaya yönelik kurs
- Diplomatik Müzakere kursu
- Diğer (Lütfen belirtiniz)

10. Lütfen bu kurslardan katıldıklarınızı biçim ve içerik bakımından değerlendiriniz (Kurslar, 9. Sorunun seçeneklerindeki gibi sıralanmıştır).

	Çok iyi (5)	İyi (4)	Yeterli (3)	Kötü (2)	Çok kötü (1)
a) kursu					
b) kursu					
c) kursu					
d) kursu					
e) kursu					
f) kursu					
g) kursu					
h) kursu					

11. Bu kurslardan sonra gittiğiniz ilk yurtdışı tayininizde, katıldığınız kursların size ne derecede faydası oldu? (Kurslar, yine aynı sıradadır).

	Çok faydalı (4)	Oldukça faydalı (3)	Biraz faydalı (2)	Hiç faydalı olmadı (1)
a) kursu				
b) kursu				
c) kursu				
d) kursu				
e) kursu				
f) kursu				
g) kursu				
h) kursu				

12. İlk yurtdışı tayin yeriniz belli olduktan sonra, yabancı bir ülkede yaşama-ya ve görev yapmaya yönelik kendi çabanızla gerçekleşen bir hazırlığınız oldu mu?

- EVET (Lütfen 13. soruyla devam ediniz)
- HAYIR (Lütfen 14. soruya geçiniz)

13. Eğer kendi çabanızla gerçekleşen hazırlığınız olduysa, aşağıdakilerden hangilerini yaptınız? (Birden fazla seçenek işaretleyebilirsiniz)

- Gideceğiniz ülkeyle ilgili kitaplar, dergiler, broşürler, vb. okumak
- Daha önce o ülkede bulunmuş olan meslektaşlarla görüşmek
- O ülkenin ülkemizdeki temsilciliğinden bilgi almak
- O ülkenin 'Post Report' unu okumak
- O ülkenin yabancı dilini öğrenmek
- Diğer (Lütfen belirtiniz)

14. İlk yurtdışı tayininize gitmeden önce, yabancı bir ülkede görev yapmak konusunda kendinizi ne derecede yeterli hissediyordunuz?

Tümüyle (4)	Oldukça (3)	Biraz (2)	Hiç (1)
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15. İlk yurtdışı tayininiz sırasında, yabancı bir ülkede ve değişik bir kültürde bulunmaktan dolayı görevinizi yapmakta ne derecede zorlandınız?

Çok (4)	Oldukça (3)	Biraz (2)	Hiç (1)
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16. İlk yurtdışı tayininiz sırasında, misyondaki görevinizi dışında, yabancı bir ülkede ve kültürde yaşamaktan dolayı sorunlar ve sıkıntılar yaşadınız mı?

- EVET. Lütfen belirtiniz:
- HAYIR.

17. İlk yurtdışı tayininizde, gittiğiniz ülkede aşağıdakilere ne derecede uyum sağladığınızı lütfen size en uygun dereceleri işaretleyerek belirtiniz.

	Tamamıyla (5)	Oldukça (4)	Yeterli (3)	Biraz (2)	Hiç (1)
a) Genel olarak yaşam koşulları					
b) İkametgah koşulları					
c) Yiyecek					
d) Alışveriş					
e) Hayat pahalılığı					
f) Boş zamanları değerlendirme olanakları					
g) Sağlık kurumları					
h) Ülke halkıyla kaynaşma					
i) Ülke halkıyla günlük ilişkiler kurma					
j) Ülke halkıyla iş dışında kurulan arkadaşlıklar					
k) Ülke halkıyla konuşmak					
l) İşinize özel sorumluluklarınız					
m) Görevinizdeki başarınız ve sizden beklenenler					
n) Amir/memur olarak sorumluluklarınız					

18. Sizce aşağıdaki öneriler yurtdışı görevde ve yabancı bir ülkede yaşamak konularından size ne derecede yararlı olabilir: Lütfen en yararlı olacaklar için 5, en az yararlı olacaklar için 1 olmak üzere 1'den 5'e kadar yapacağınız değerlendirmeleri her seçeneğin yanındaki kutucuğa yazınız.

- Yurtdışı tayinlerin gitmeden en az 6 ay önce kesinleşmiş olması
- Yurtdışındaki misyonların çalışma şekli konusunda eğitim verilmesi
- Yurtdışı görevde özellikle önemli olabilecek protokol konularıyla ilgili kurs verilmesi (Akademi'de verilen protokol kursuna ek olarak)
- Bakanlık tarafından ayarlanacak, özel ve/ya devlet kuruluşları tarafından verilecek brifingler

- ❑ Yurtdışındaki gezi, konferans ve/ya toplantılara katılımcı ve/ya gözlemci olarak yollanmak
- ❑ Yurtdışına kurye olarak yollanmak
- ❑ Yurt içindeki çok uluslu anlaşma, konferans, toplantı v.b.'lerine katılımcı, gözlemci, mihmandar, çevirmen vb olarak yollanmak
- ❑ Geçici görevle Türkiye'nin yurtdışı misyonlarına yollanmak
- ❑ Yurtdışı tayine gidecek olan herkese gideceği ülkenin dilini öğrenmesi için kurs olanağı sağlanması
- ❑ Yabancı dil eğitimine gidilecek ülkede de devam edilebilmesi için Bakanlık tarafından maddi destek sağlanması
- ❑ Yurtdışı tayin öncesi kurslara geniş kapsamlı müzakere ve diplomatik müzakere kurslarının eklenmesi
- ❑ 'Post Report'ların içeriğinin meslek memurlarının görüşlerine de başvurularak standart hale getirilmesi
- ❑ Yurtdışı tayine gidecek olanların gidecekleri ülke hakkında bilgi edinmelerini sağlamak için, daha önce aynı ülkede görev yapmış meslektaşlarına ulaşabilmelerini kolaylaştıracak organizasyonların (örneğin, bir veri bankası hazırlanması) Bakanlık tarafından yapılması
- ❑ Yurtdışı taşınmayla ilgili ortaya çıkabilecek ailevi problemlerin (seyahat, eşyaların taşınması, ikametgâh, eşin çalışması, çocukların okulu, vb.) çözümlenmesine yardımcı olarak organizasyonların Bakanlık tarafından yapılması
- ❑ Yurtdışı tayin öncesi kurs programına temel prensipleri içeren bir müfredat hazırlanması.

