ISCTE Business School
Instituto Universitário de Lisboa

CROSS-CULTURAL ADJUSTMENT FACTORS OF
CHINESE EXPATRIATES IN PORTUGAL

Liu Hongyu

Dissertation submitted as partial requirement for the conferral of
Master in Human Resources management at ISCTE – University Institute of
Lisbon, 2014

Supervisor:
Prof. Virginia Trigo, Associate Professor, ISCTE Business School

May 2015

Abstract

More and more Chinese expatriates are working in other countries because of globalization and Chinese economics development. In Portugal, many Chinese companies have established their branches in recent years. While working in a Western country, which has totally different culture with China, Chinese expatriates usually face some difficulties to adjust to the new environment.

In this research 10 Chinese expatriates were interviewed. The research adopted qualitative method to analyze the factors that affect their adjustment to the new culture. These respondents are expatriates working in Lisbon and from different companies. Results show that, seven main factors, among those extracted from the literate, have a great influence on the cultural adjustment of Chinese expatriates in Portugal. These factors include language ability, personal traits, knowledge of the environment, cultural differences, interpersonal competences, support, and performance.

The results provide some guidance and suggestions for an organization to select a suitable person to international assignments, and help the Chinese expatriates on their adjustment to adjust the new environment in a shorter time and with a better performance.

Key words: cultural adjustment, expatriates, culture, qualitative method
JEL Classification: F2, M1

Resumo

Um número cada vez maior de expatriados chineses está a trabalhar noutros países devido não só ao fenómeno da globalização mas também ao crescente desenvolvimento da economia chinesa e, nos últimos anos, muitas empresas chinesas têm vindo a estabelecer-se em Portugal. Ao trabalharem num país ocidental, com uma cultura muito diferente da chinesa, os expatriados chineses enfrentam com frequência dificuldades de adaptação à nova envolvente.

Nesta dissertação foram entrevistados dez expatriados chineses. Adoptou-se depois uma abordagem qualitativa para analisar os fatores que afetam a sua adaptação a uma nova cultura. Os respondentes são expatriados que trabalham em Lisboa em diferentes empresas. Os resultados revelam que existem sete fatores principais, de entre os extraídos da literatura, que exercem uma maior influência na adaptação cultural dos expatriados chineses que trabalham em Portugal, nomeadamente: capacidade linguística, traços pessoais, grau de conhecimento da envolvente, diferenças culturais, competências interpessoais, nível de apoio e de desempenho.

Estes resultados fornecem indicações e sugestões para ajudar as organizações a selecionarem as pessoas mais adequadas para o desempenho de lugares internacionais assim apoiando os expatriados chineses na sua adaptação a uma nova envolvente num prazo mais curto e com um melhor desempenho.

Palavras chave: adaptação cultural, expatriados, cultura, métodos qualitativos

Classificação JEL: F2, M1

Index

1. Introduction

Globalization has led to a significant increase in cross-cultural interactions and it is becoming an important source of competitive superiority for organizations to have an effectiveness of international assignments (Lee & Sukoco, 2010). There are more and more people who are working in different countries because of the increasing globalized and flexible economic environment. Those who have international experience and cross-culture backgrounds are increasingly popular in many organizations including multinational corporations, non-profit organizations and government. There has been a growing interest in international human resource management since the early 1990s because of the increase in the number and influence of international companies, explaining the growing recognition that cross-culture human resource management is an important factor of success in international business (Shen, 2004). The high failure rate of international assignment (20%-40%), has been experienced because of expatriate's adjustment problems and studies show that almost a quarter of expatriates leave the present company and seek repatriation within one year (Mendehall & Oddou, 1985; Black & Greersen, 1999).

In recent years, more and more Chinese companies invest in Portugal and other countries. In 2011, there were 11,458 Chinese residents in Portugal, a five times increase compared with 2001. HUAWEI participated in telecom market of Portugal in 2003; ZTE Corporation established a subsidiary in 2003 in Portugal; China Development Bank, ICBC, BOC entered Portugal in 2009, 2011 and 2013 respectively; in February 2012 State Grid Corporation acquired 25% of REN's shares; and so on. It is always a challenge to working in a culturally different environment, especially when lacking of cultural knowledge and host language ability (Dowling & Welch, 2005). Hence, working in a western culture country, which is totally different from China, Chinese expatriates usually face huge difficulties.

The purpose of this research is to explore the adjustment factors that affect Chinese expatriates when they work and live in Portugal, aiming to provide guidance for Chinese businesses and related organizations to evaluating the expatriate's adjustment, and increasing management knowledge of employees working in other countries.

2. Theoretical review

A review of literature is essential to understand the cross-cultural adjustment of expatriates. This chapter will focus on the literature on expatriates' adjustment, researched on culture, working adjustment, general adjustment, interactive adjustments, and related personal characteristics. Cross-cultural adjustment has been generally defined as the process of adaptation to living and working in a new culture. It involves uncertainty reduction through imitating and learning appropriate local behaviors and harmonizing with the culture (Peltokorpi and Froese, 2009).

2.1. Culture

It is important to define it because culture gaps have a great influence on the living and working of expatriates. Hofstede and Hofstede (2005) defined culture as "the collective programming of the mind that distinguishes the members of one group or category of people from others". It means that the way people think, feel and act is influenced by their "software of the mind" like a computer program (Hofstede and Hofstede 2005).

People are not born with a certain specific culture, it is a process of learning. It is a collective phenomenon which is shared with others. Ting-Toomey and Chung define culture as "a learned meaning system that consists of patterns of traditions, beliefs, values, norms, meanings, and symbols that are passed on from one generation to the next and are shared to varying degrees by interacting members of a community" （Ting-Toomey and Chung, 2005, p. 20）

Babiker, Cox and Miller (1990) put forward the concept of cultural distance, which means a variable quantity in cross-culture adjustment. They think that the difference

between home and host culture will have an effect on people when their lives have changed. According to the features of culture, it can be divided into a system of far or near culture. For example, the culture distance between Portugal and Spain is close, while the distance is farther between Portugal and China. The farther the culture distance is, the more difficulties expatriates will have.

Cultural identity can be seen as various manners. The modernists believe that cultural identity is a fixed identity that similarly describes individuals from one specific population or nation (Schwartz 2006). The social identity theory, which was put forward by Tajfel and Turner (1979), shows that there is a strong relationship between a group identity and self-identity, self-esteem, and out-group behavior and emphasizes the importance of belonging to a homogeneous group of individuals. Therefore, Kim (1994) concluded that identity can be seen as a bounded system between individual and group which are merged and integrated into one.

When talking about national identity, the concept can be diverse considering different factors, language, norms, values ideology and symbols, and is associated with nations. The source for this national identity can be multiple, including the language, economy and common history within a country (Anderson, 1983).

However, the postmodernist believe that "all human experience is variable, malleable, local and particular, difficult to define in any general terms, and in constant flux" (Schwartz et al. 2006, p.3). Due to globalization, one person may live and work in different cultural system, resulting in one's personal cultural identities getting more and more diverse (Donnay, 2012). Identity is the combination of one person's characteristics, feelings, goals, origins, which are vital to recognize and determine who he is. That is to say, identity is what positions and constitutes of one person in the world and what makes himself and his relations with others meaningful (Siebers, 2011). This means that cultural identity is multidimensional, that it relates and deals with who is in relation to another. These viewpoints reveal that identities are socially

constructed and evolving, changing with time and emerging in new categories.

In the context of globalization, an increasing number of people spend their childhood in one country and then move to another at their later times. Intercultural situations trigger a multitude of changes for individuals, such as behaviors, attitudes or lifestyles, which may lead to a continual re-shaping of those who experienced the situation (Schwartz, 2006). Kim (1994, p238) argued that "As an individual's cultural identity evolves toward increasing intercultural identity, that person's definition of self and others becomes increasingly less restricted by rigid cultural and social categories. Instead, the person's perceptual orientations become broadened and enriched by an increased ability to "particularize" his/her perception of each communicative event in the context of a specific situation".

2.2. Cross-cultural adjustment

Adjustment refers to a process through which an individual feels suitable in living and working in an unfamiliar environment. Cross-cultural adjustment is defined as the degree of psychological comfort with various aspects of a new cultural environment (Oberg, 1960; Nicholson, 1984; Black, 1988). It is the perceived degree of psychological comfort and familiarity a person has with the new host culture (Black, 1988; Blacket al., 1991). There is a big difference between sociocultural and psychosocial adjustment according to the literature. Sociocultural adjustment focuses more on the skills in cultural adaptation, for example general intercultural competences, the ability to live in the foreign country, and the management of daily life. The success of it mainly relies on the ability of being proficient in the host language, understanding of the host culture, the cultural distance between the host and native culture and interactions with members of the host residents (Ward & Kennedy, 1996). On the other hand, psychological adjustment refers to subjective well-being,

personal characteristics or emotional satisfaction.

Three categories of cross-cultural adjustment are indicated by Black and Stephens (1989). The first kind is named working adjustment, it involves the adaptation for work issues, like new job tasks, work roles, and new work environment; the second category is called general adjustment, it involves the overall adaptation to living in a new cultural condition, such as housing conditions, health care, and cost of living; the last one is interactive adjustment, it refers to the comfort achieved in interacting with local nationals in both work and living situations (Black & Stevens, 1989).

2.2. 1. Working adjustment

Black (1988) defined expatriate work adjustment as the level of psychological comfort an expatriate feels when facing the different work values, expectations and new work environment. Black, et al. (1992) believe that, based on the similarity of job process and content, work adjustment is the easiest of the three adjustment facets. But it is still not easy to overcome in a different culture environment.

Takeuchi, et al. (2002), in their study of 298 Japanese expatriates working in the US with their spouses found that language ability and previous diverse cultural experiences were positively related to work adjustment. Meanwhile, the results also indicated that there is a positive relationship between general adjustment and work adjustment. If an expatriate is competent in general adjustment, it is easier to achieve the ability to adjust to a new work environment. Similarly, through the survey of Japanese expatriates working in the United States, Takeuchi, et al. (2005) found that precious cross-cultural work experiences facilitate the ability of expatriate work adjustment. Also, the investigation shows that prior international knowledge promotes the expatriate to achieve the ability of general adjustment, which converts to the capability of work adjustment. They also found that the one who had similar

experience with America were easier to adjust to the working condition, compared with those who did not have.

Black and Gregersen (1991) studied a sample of 220 Western expatriates working in the Pacific Rim. They measured the length of foreign working time the expatriates had and found that there was not any correlation between previous international knowledge and the present working assignment. The reason for this phenomenon, they believe, is that the cultural distance between western culture and Asian culture is larger.

The language ability of the host country has also showed to have positive relationship between expatriate work adjustments. Takeuchi, Yun, and Russell (2002) found that it is easier for expatriates to communicate and develop interpersonal relationships at work when they are fluent in the host nation language. The language ability promotes expatriates to understand and complete their assignments more smoothly. It is helpful to increase the level of confidence and understand work instructions if an expatriate can use the host language fluently. Meanwhile, Selmer (2006) found that there is a strong relationship between language ability and interactive adjustment. The interactiveness, in turn, has positive effect on work adjustment.

Shaffer, et al. (1999) researched over 450 expatriates from ten different US companies and examined the impact of support from supervisors and co-workers on work adjustment. They found that supervisors support cannot positively affect work adjustment especially in the case of an expatriate without prior international experience. However, the result indicated that the support from co-workers has a strong effect on work adjustment.

On the contrary, the survey conducted by Black and Porter (1991) shows that the support from supervisors and co-workers can lead to work adjustment and job satisfaction for expatriates. Those who provide support usually consider it as a stress

buffer for expatriates. "Whenever an expatriate perceives support from co-workers, it aids the expatriate employee to relate more confidently with co-workers that are nationals of the host country, and thus facilitates work adjustment, and job performance in this new environment" (Black & Porter, 1991, p.108). Furthermore, the study of Shaffer et al. (1999) indicated that such support provided to new expatriates would help them understand the new culture better, and adapt to the new working behavior easier.

Role novelty is another important factor in work adjustment. It is defined as the level of differences between current assignment in the new work condition and the previous assignment (Andreason 2003) and it is a challenge for an expatriate not only from the perspective of a new cultural environment, but also from the new skills and procedures at the new job. For instance, due to differences like employment laws, economic policies, and other political rules, the expatriates may have to face issues like difficulties in coping with the work rules and legislation to cater for the requirements of the new location.

Kittler, et al. (2011) researched a sample of German expatriates working in five other European countries and Russia. In order to determine the relationship between role novelty and work adjustment, they controlled the variables like age, duration of assignment, language skills, cultural distance, family and previous assignment. The result of this research did not provides a negative correlation between them. The researchers believe that the result of their investigation may have been affected by the fact that the average time spent in the country of the sample population was over three years. As a result, these senior expatriates no longer saw their assignment as different from their previous assignment.

2.2.2. General adjustment

General adjustment was defined as feeling comfortable with local food, health care facilities, entertainment and housing conditions, shopping and entertainment opportunities in general. General adjustment "involves a process through which the expatriate becomes comfortable and establishes familiarity with the local surrounding in the host country" (Wang & Takeuchi, 2007, p.1439). Through the study of 195 America individuals working in Japan, Black (1988) found that it is very helpful to adapt to the daily general life in a new country if they have the previous experience of the host country. Also, the research of Takeuchi, et al. (2002) shows that prior knowledge of host countries has a significant impact on expatriate general adjustment. The prior foreign knowledge helps expatriates to get better general adjustment ability in a new environment.

By contrast, the survey about 250 American expatriates working in four Asian countries, which Black and Gregeren (1991) conducted, showed that there is no relationship between previous cross-cultural experience and general adjustment. They believe the reason for this phenomenon is that the cultural novelty between the two examined cultures is enormous. It is not enough to improve general adjustment when there is great culture difference between the host nation culture and the expatriate. This means that the prior cross-culture knowledge has no influence on general adjustment if they are unrelated cultural experiences. Similarly, Selmer (1999) investigated 343 western expatriates working in Honk Kong and found that there is no notable influence on general adjustment if the prior experience is not related with Chinese culture. Overall, these findings illustrate that prior cultural knowledge that is not culturally related to the new environment cannot have significant impact on general adjustment.

Another survey conducted by McGinley in 2008, among 460 expatriates working in

Russia, found that there are different levels of adjustments depending on different aspects of general adjustment, like food, housing, health care and cost of living. McGinley shows that expatriates usually have a moderate level adjustment in factors like living conditions, a higher level of adjustment to food and housing, while a lower level of adjustment in health care, cost of living and entertainment facilities. This means that expatriates tend to have different levels of adjustment depending on the various aspects of general adjustment.

The study taken by Takeuchi et al. (2002) researched the effect of three factors in Japanese expatriates working the United States (host country language, willingness to communicate, and perceived cultural novelty respectively). They found that the host language and willingness to communicate were not significantly related to general adjustment, while cultural novelty has positive relationship with general adjustment. What i's more, the result also shows that the more the differences between prior culture and host nation culture, the more difficult it is to adjust to the new environment for the expatriate (Takeuchi, Yun, and Russell 2002).

Huaug et al. (2005) researched 83 US expatriates working in Taiwan to explore the relationship between personality traits and adjustment. There are five big traits in their survey; extroversion, agreeableness, conscientious, neuroticism, and openness to experience. The results indicate that extroversion and openness to experience have positive relationship with general adjustment, while the other three did not show any direct and significant effect on general adjustment. Similarly, through the exploration of the relationship between the big five personality traits and adjustments, Shaffer et al. (2006) found that extraversion and agreeableness have positive correlation with general adjustment.

Selmer (2006) researched foreign expatriates in China, to investigate the relationship between Chinese language ability and their adjustment ability. Controlling the time of expatriates spent in China, the results show that language proficiency is positively

correlated to general adjustment, and also positively related to the expatriate job performance. The limitation of the research was that most subjects were chief executives and highly placed employees with a limited possibility of generalization.

2.2.3. Interactive adjustments

Interactive adjustment for an expatriate is the ability to interact with host national without any constraints (Andreason, 2008). It is a process to adapt to a different communication style in a new environment, and develop new interpersonal communication with the host country nationals (Black 1990). Previous research shows that it is the most difficult of the three facets. It is helpful to adjust to the new cultural environment if the expatriate interacts with the local people especially if he is open to accept this. The positive attitude toward the new culture is necessary and important during international assignment for an expatriate. Through observing and accepting the new environment and living style, expatriates adjust better in the host community (Black et al. 1992).

It is different for one person to adjust to different cultures; for example, it is more difficult to adjust to a long distant culture than to a similar one (Black 1991). Similarly, Andreason (2003) found that the more cultural novelty there is between the host country and the home country, the harder for an expatriate to achieve interactive adjustment. In other words, expatriates will suffer more to achieve interactive adjustment in an environment that is culturally different from their own. Through the study of dimensions and determinants of expatriate's adjustment, Shaffer et al. (1999) found that a lower degree of perceived difference between the host country and expatriate's own country will promote interactive adjustment process. Comparing with other cultures, the American culture is more individualistic. For this reason, it is the fourth most difficult country for expatriates of collectivist cultures to adjust

(Brookfield Global Relocation Services, 2012). An expatriate in the United States is not only faced with problems like communication style, language obstacles, and different living conditions, but also with adapting to the more individualistic and freedom personal living style which is more difficult.

Language ability plays a significant role in interactive adjustment. Shaffer et al. (1999) found that the ability of speaking the host country language facilitates the awareness of any contradictory demands, and fellow employees at work. Also, Graf (2004) believes that the essential ingredient of cross-culture skill is language. Although the study of Caligiuri et al. (2001) found that host language for an expatriate is not necessary, there is no doubt that speaking and understanding the language of the host community has a positive effect on adjustment. Through the investigation of 73 expatriates from different countries, they also found the fact that the expatriate who does not speak the host language will face more difficulties than those who speak.

What i's more, in the study of Livermore (2007), it is shown that it is difficult to interpret events and behavior even in familiar cultural contexts. Hence, it will be even more difficult in the case of unfamiliar conditions. In other words, it is less difficult to achieve interactive adjustment ability in a host country with similar culture and language, in comparison to working in a country with a different culture and language. Furthermore, he also found that, it is easier to communicate and interact with the host country if the expatriate is open to learn the local culture and language. The one who is open to learn and change will more likely interact with local people and experience more local customs than the one who is not.

2.3. Personal and organizational factors

2.3.1. Personality traits

As mentioned before, many researchers believe that there are five core personality traits. The big five factors are: (1) extroversion, that is, the interest or behavior to interact with others in one environment including sociability, talkativeness, assertiveness and high amounts of emotional expressiveness; (2) agreeableness, a personality dimension that contains characteristics like kindness, cooperativeness, trust, sympathetic, affection, and consideration; (3) conscientiousness, the personality trait that includes thoroughness, carefulness, and vigilance, a characteristic of those who are usually efficient and organized, show self-discipline, good impulse control and goal-directed behaviors; (4) neuroticism a personality trait characterized by anxiety, moodiness, jealousy, loneliness and frustration; (5) openness, a trait that prompts free access to knowledge and information, and to a broad range of interests (Shaffer et al. 2006). These five big factors play an important role in people's adjustment.

Several researchers were involved in the discovery and clarification of the Big Five factors. At first, in 1936 Gordon et al. described 4504 adjectives, which they believed were descriptive of the traits that people have. Then Cattell (1940) reduced the 4504 traits terms to 171 through retaining the adjectives and eliminating synonyms and constructed a Sixteen Personality Factor Questionnaire, which is a personality test that is selected from the adjectives. After that, in 1961, Tupes and Christal found five relatively strong and recurrent factors from the sixteen personality factors. The five factors were "surgency, dependability, agreeableness, emotional stability, and culture". Finally, the five-factor structure has been labeled by Norman in 1963. And it was been known as the Big Five since 1981 by Goldberg, a title chosen not to reflect the intrinsic in deep but to represent that the factors are extremely broad.

In terms of an expatriate, the Big Five traits are reflected on the ability to interact in a new environment (extroversion), the willingness to cooperate and have a good relationship with others (agreeableness), the ability of enduring promise and being stable at work (conscientiousness), the capacity to handle pressure and personal

emotion (emotional stability), and the tendency for innovation or curiousity and being open to the new living condition (openness).

Research indicates that there is a positive correlation between the Big Five traits and expatriates successful adjustment (Stroh & Caligiuri, 1998; Huang et al. 2005; Ramalu, 2010). A better interaction adjustment ability is usually related with a high score on agreeableness and better work adjustment is usually related with a high performance on conscientiousness and openness (Swagle and Jome, 2005). As a part of extroversion, excellent host language ability will avoid a culture shock and make the adjustment smoother when living in a new cultural environment (Garcia et al. 2002). Meanwhile, the one who is extroverted can help him/her to adjust better in the general environment, and high scores of agreeableness facilitate general and interaction adjustment. Also, the one who has better conscientiousness and openness can achieve better working adjustment (Ramalu 2010). Similarly, the study of Caligiuri (2000) shows that extroversion, agreeableness, and emotional stability are negatively associated to the desire to terminate the expatriate assignment, while, conscientiousness is positively related to the supervisor rated performance on the assignment. In general, the one who has better Big Five traits can adjust easier and be successful in foreign assignment.

The Big Five factors do not mean that there are only five factors of people's personality trait but these five factors abstractly summarize individuals' characteristics, and each of them represent a large number of different specific personal traits.

2.3.2. Organizational factors

The organization for which the expatriate works plays a very important role in cultural adjustment. The factors of organization include training, support, and the

organizational culture. In terms of cross-cultural training, it can be defined as an educational process used to improve the knowledge of the new environment, and develop the ability of cognitive, affective, and behavioral competencies (Littrell et al. 2006). The training of the companies is an essential factor for and it is evident that training before departure is effective in facilitating success on expatriate assignment (Littrell et al. 2006).

Cultural training can facilitate personal adjustment in various ways. First, due to the effect of reducing uncertain factors of transition and benefit to form right expectations, it can reduce the stress of the expatriates and help them adjust easier. Second, it is helpful to figure out the appropriate life style and behavior in the new condition and know how to adapt to the new job in a best way while helping them to have realistic expectations in respect to living and working in the host country. Meanwhile, the cross-cultural training can help expatriates to deal with problems in a situation, which is uncertain and unexpected (Caligiuri, 2001). In general, cross-cultural training is a key factor in, adjusting to the new job challenges, promoting assignment success, even in increasing the return on investment.

Although there is a common sense about the effect of cross-cultural training (reducing culture shock, managing the new condition and cultural differences, avoiding failure), the training still has some problems. For example, many international organizations do not have the quality to provide formal and organized knowledge of the host country. In addition, in terms of the cross-cultural training theories, there is a lack of unitary theoretical framework. Also, it is difficult to examine the result of the cross-culture training when the expatriate goes to the host country (Morley, 2004; Littrell, 2006; Brynningsen, 2009).

Another important factor is the support from the organization. Due to the lacking of support from previous social network, the support from organizations usually has a significant effect on expatriates to adapt to the new cultural environment

(Grant-Vallone & Ensher). Social support can be defined as a "buffer against stress and a positive association of emotional well-being" (Copeland and Norell, 2002, p.255). Social support can come from family members, friends, co-workers, and companies, but when people enter in a new environment, they cannot get the support from the previous ways. In addition, the impact of the organization will be higher in a new working environment since it is almost the main approach for expatriates to receive support in the host country. It will produce a positive impact on expatriates' work adjustment if they can acquire effective support from supervisor, co-worker and the organization.

The differences among organizations also have very important impact on expatriates' adjustment, and these differences are from organizational culture, leadership styles, and the regulation system of the company. Morley in 2004 found that the greater the difference between home and host organization, the more difficulty there is in the work adjustment. In turn, if there is little difference, the level of uncertain factors will be reduced. According to the flexibility and stability dimensions, organizational culture can be divided into collaborative (clan culture), control (hierarchy culture), creative (adhocracy culture), and competitive (market culture). In the host country an organization may follow different cultural ways, such as ethnocentric, polycentric, geocentric, and region centric approach. According to different approaches, the values, attitudes, HR practices and policies will be different.

In addition, the leadership style is also a factor to affect expatriates' adjustment. There are three factors to influence leadership styles, national culture, political culture and organizational culture.

3. The Research Method

The aim of this chapter is to provide the reason for the specific method used during this study. Additionally, the process of data collection will be explained, and how it was analyzed. In order to gain a more detailed understanding of the Chinese expatriates working in Portugal, this research used a qualitative method to understand their thoughts, feelings, living and working conditions.

3.1 Why choose a qualitative method

Quantitative methods use complex statistical and mathematical data to measure social phenomenon or understand behavior. These methods are deductive and generalizing, from general to detail. They can be used in interpreting causal and statistical relationships through hypotheses (Babbie, 2010). These methods are usually employed in research with large samples and when it is easy to find generalizable data. However, the quantitative methods are not suitable in such cases that are not simply measurable by numbers (Silverman 2005).

Qualitative research can be defined as a research that explore issues and explains phenomena through analyzing unstructured data. The data is collected in depth interviews, through the understanding of words, content analysis, and experiences rather than mathematical numbers. The ways of collecting are usually through observation, interviews or documents like diaries and letters. The method is inductive and idiographic, it begins from a single case study or observation and the purpose is trying to understand the context rather than to make generalizations about a population (Babbie, 2010).

The reason to select a research method mainly depends on the identity of the research

topic. It is more appropriate to analyze and summarize information if one topic is new and has little existing literature for a qualitative approach (Creswell 1994). There is little research about Chinese expatriates living in Portugal, even in Europe. Instead of measuring the condition through numbers, this research needs to use open-end questions and deep interview to explore the expatriates' views. Miles and Huberman (1994) state that qualitative methods are "a source of grounded, rich descriptions and explanations of processes in identifiable local contexts" (p.1). Martens (2005) states that qualitative methods are suitable to be adopted in research that needs deep description. Thus, for these reasons, a qualitative research method has been employed in this study.

3.2 Research design

The design of the study was according to constructivist paradigm. Hesse (1980) posits that constructivist paradigm is closely associated with qualitative research, which means the researcher can modify the initial questions formulated as the research progresses. Merriam (1998) explained qualitative research methods as "an umbrella concept covering some forms of questions that assist us in understanding and explaining the meaning of social environment with little disruption of the natural setting as possible" (p.5). The qualitative approach is a process to seek a phenomenon or experience through individuals' personal perceptions and experiences. Therefore, this study gathers information from several Chinese expatriates who are working in Portugal, through an in-depth interview with them.

There are two basic steps in an interview according to Ratner (2002). The first step consists in the formation of the questions, which put forward the topic to discuss. The second step consists in a deep interview through a discussion based on the first step. As for this study, a semi-structured interview was conducted with ten Chinese

expatriates working in various organizations in Portugal. The semi-structured interview is composed by two types of questions: (1) close ended questions that give choices to restrict the answers; and (2) open ended questions, which need in-depth discussion and give interviewees the opportunity to describe what he or she wants.

Based on the theoretical review mentioned before, there are four parts of the questions design. The first part is general adjustment, which deals with the overall adaptation factors like housing condition and health care. The second part involves working adjustment, which illustrates the adjustment in the new working environment, such as new job tasks and work role. The third part covers interactive adjustments, which enable to understand the level of interaction with the local society. The last one is based on the Big Five personality traits to understand the influence of adjustment.

3.3 Data collection

The data for this study were collected by interviewing ten current Chinese expatriates working and living in Portugal. The participants chose the location where the semi-structured face-to-face interview would be conducted. Each of these interviews lasted for one to two hours. The interviews were done using a few close-ended questions and mostly open ended questions, which need in-depth discussion. During the interviews, the researcher only used the questions formulated in advance as a guide to direct the discussion, but also adopted the informal way to allow the interviewees to tell their story freely. Both a digital recorder and written notes were used in the process of interviews. In order to protect the privacy of the participants and for easy identification they were labelled from A to J.

The interviewees consisted in seven male expatriates and three female expatriates from different organizations, such as Huawei, ZTE, China Development Bank, ICBC

and BOC. The age ranged from 27 to 51 and they were living in Portugal for several months to five years. All the interviews were conducted in Chinese and translated to English. All of the interviews used the same questions and the average duration of each of them was approximately one hour and thirty minutes.

The participants have different backgrounds, which is beneficial to the comprehensiveness and representativeness of the data. Three of them were under 30 years old, five were between 30 to 40 years old, and two expatriates were over 40 years old. In terms of education background, six participants have bachelor degree, two have master degree and two PhD. Most of them had international experiences before coming to Portugal. Also, they came from different provinces in China, such as Shanghai, Shenzhen, Shandong, and Hong Kong. Meanwhile, they have various occupation types, ranging from Professor, Government officer, engineer, and marketing executive. Table 1 illustrates the demographic information of the participants.

Table 1 Expatriate Demographics

Name	Gender	Age	Education Background	Occupation/ Sector	Duration of Assignment	Second language	marital status
A	Male	51	Bachelor	Secretary/ Embassy	Two years	English	Married
B	Male	45	PhD	Professor/ University	One year	English	Married
C	Male	31	Bachelor	Salesman/ Real estate	One year	English	Single
D	Male	28	Master	Engineer/ Electricity	Six months	English	Married
E	Female	31	PhD	Engineer/ Electricity	Three months	English	Married
F	Female	31	Bachelor	Manager/ Electronic	More than two years	English	Married
G	Male	29	Master	Engineer/ Electronic	Two months	English	Married
H	Female	30	Bachelor	Project manager/ Electronic	More than five years	English	Married
I	Male	30	Bachelor	Engineer/ Electronic	More than three years	English	Single
J	Male	27	Bachelor	Marketing/ Electronic	More than two years	English	Married

3.4 Analysis

It is necessary to select a suitable method for subsequent analysis in a research. Data analysis in qualitative study "involves reducing the volume of raw information, sifting trivia from significance, identifying significant patterns, and constructing a framework for communicating the essence of what the data reveal" (Patton, 2002, p.432). Mertens stated that it is the process of describing and explaining the data collected from interviews, observation and documents. (Mertens, 2005).

Mayring (2003) believes that qualitative data analysis is an approach to analysis communication material in a systematic way. According to Mayring, there are three ways to interpret the interview content: (1) summary, which consists in reducing the

raw data and selecting the useful information; (2) explication, meaning analyzing and interpreting the information; and (3) structuring in order to filter necessary information from the data.

Accordingly, the first step of data analysis is defining the raw material, including the respondents' background, the methods of choosing sample, and how the information is to be analyzed (Marying 2003). Miles and Huberman (1994) stated that qualitative analysis utilizes words which can be structured in such a way to allow the researcher to contrast, compare, analyze and give patterns to the words. In this study, all notes records and tape-recorded interviews were transcribed to a Word document. Then they were read and analyzed the information detailed. The data were generalized into seven main factors, which were mentioned by the respondents many times or that they thought were important. In this way, the amount of data collected from interviews was reduced into specific categories, which is helpful to show how this information was related to adjustment and what the academic significance to the main research purpose was. Finally, these seven categories were analyzed and interpreted and the conclusions were drawn based on the analysis.

4‧Results

The aim of this research is to identify the factors that affect the adjustment of Chinese expatriates in Portugal. This chapter will show the most common factors of cross-culture adjustment in relation to the interviewees. The results provided by the survey are presented according to the records of the interviews and are subsequently analyzed deeply. Unlike quantitative research which has a standard format to describe the results, qualitative research does not have a standard format of findings. Instead, the analysis of qualitative data should be enriched with direct descriptions to enhance the understanding of the conclusions and provide relevant interpretations (Taylor and Bogdan 1998). This means that the core of qualitative research is the data itself and, what the researcher should do is to extract the data richness, breadth and depth.

Based on the literature review the data collected were organized according to, eight main factors that affect Chinese expatriates in Portugal. They are detailed in the following order: language ability, personal traits, the ability of adaptation, interpersonal competence, support from organization and family, performance, and cultural difference. As already mentioned in the methodology chapter, 10 Chinese expatriates were interviewed. Table 1 has provided their background information.

4.1. Language ability

Language ability is the basis for effective communication, which is essential in cross-culture adjustment. According to the literature review in chapter 2.2, it was found that the ability to speak and understand the host country language can help expatriates to understand the differences of the host country's culture and to integrate with local people (Shaffer et al. 1999). Meanwhile, Graf (2004) found that the host

language ability is an essential factor for intercultural skills as it makes easier to communicate with the host nationals. These views can be proved by the interviews with these Chinese expatriates.

"I thought that my English is very good before I come to Portugal, but when I use it in everyday life, I found that I need to improve a lot. At the beginning, I was a little confused that I need to think a few times to recall the technical words in English."(See Annexes 7.2 respondent E1)

"I think there are some problems that bother me in the daily life, because many people in the shop do not know English. It is difficult to communicate with them." (See Annexes 7.2 respondent G1)

Expatriates C, D, and G also mentioned that language is an important factor in cross-culture adjustment.

None of these Chinese expatriates knows Portuguese language; all they can speak is English. However, as their second language, English is totally different from Chinese language and many Chinese people do not master it very well. Even if they prepare well and have good English education background, they also need time to adjust to the English language environment when they come to Europe. What i's more, as per reports of Eurobarometer (2012), only 27% of native Portuguese speak English (figure 1). Comparing with other regions, Europe is traditionally English-oriented. Almost all EU citizens have had at least some contact with English during their life time. However, in terms of the population of speaking proficient English, the result is not that optimistic (Jakub Marian, 2012). Therefore, the language is a significant ingredient for Chinese expatriates to adjust to the environment in Portugal.

Figure 1 Percentage of population able to hold a conversation in English in the EU

by country
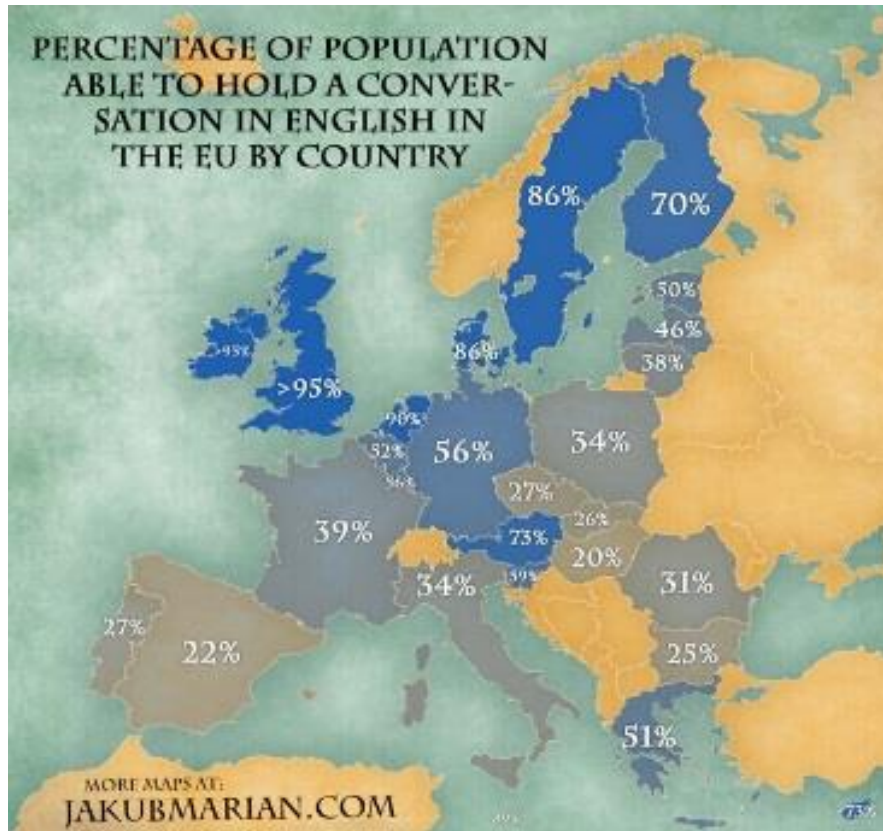
4.2. Personality traits

As previously showed in the literature review, there are five major personality traits, extroversion, agreeableness, conscientious, emotional stability and openness respectively. Like many skills acquired in cross-cultural adjustment, some special personal traits also facilitate the process of adjustment, and some characteristics are go against to the process. Table 2 shows the various characteristics that mentioned by the 10 expatriates.

Table 2 Personality traits mentioned by respondents

Personality traits	Frequency
Extroversion	6
Agreeableness	5
Openness to experience	7
Conscientious	0
Emotional stability	0

Seven Chinese respondents expressed that openness to experience is an important factor in cross-cultural adjustment. It involves six dimensions, including fantasy, aesthetic sensitivity, attentiveness to inner feelings, preference for variety, and intellectual curiosity. The study conducted by Mendenhall and Oddou (1985) found that openness and sociability are two necessary traits for building new relationships during intercultural assignments because these two characteristics will affect the manner of a person in a given situation, such as intercultural interaction. Previous research found that an expatriate who possesses the personality traits of openness can adjust better during his/her international assignment (Downess et al. 2007). From the data collected, it is evident that the one who has open mind and curiousity to the new environment usually adjusts better in Portugal. Expatriate J said *"I am open minded and tend to accept new things, and like traveling. And I also have the ability of independent living. If you are a person who likes to stay at home, I think it is the same as both working in China and overseas." I think it is suitable for me because I have an open mind. I like business trips because I can see the scenery of other countries (See Annexes 7.2 respondent G2). It is a good chance to enrich my experiences, to broaden eyes and the salary is good. I can travel to other countries during the expatriate time (See Annexes 7.2 respondent C2).*

From the literature review we know that a high score on agreeableness is related with better adjustment. Agreeableness is reflected in kindness, easy going, friendlyness, and other related behaviors. Three respondents mentioned the simple interpersonal relationship in Portugal. The interpersonal relationship is totally different between Chinese and Portuguese. In European countries, people usually have a simple and straightforward relationship while the relationship between Chinese is usually complex. Sometimes Chinese may be confused about it, especially if he or she is not a straightforward person. Therefore, *respondent A said "I like simple interpersonal relationships, so working here makes me feel comfortable"; Respondent C "I like the direct and simple relationship between people, and I am also a straightforward person. So it is good for me to work here"; and respondent H answered that "Personally, I like the way that divides life and work in two parts, and the simple and direct way of communication."*

Another important factor is extroversion, which is related with characteristics like outgoing, energetic behavior, and talkativeness. Respondent B who has adjusted very well in Portugal shared that "*I think if one person is too passive, he or she will be hard to adapt to the international life. Because, in a strange environment, many things need to be recognized in an active way".* By contrast, Respondent D provided an opposite situation of personal characteristics. He said *"I am more introverted, and not good at communication. I tend to focus at work itself. That is not good to integrate in the local life."*

The interviews revealed no valuable information about the traits of Conscientious and Emotional stability.

4.3. Knowledge of the environment

The general knowledge about the host country has a positive effect on one's adaptability. The knowledge of the host community can come from the previous experiences of expatriates, learning and training. Respondent B is a good example of being familiar with the society of Portugal. *"I have more than ten year's international experiences"*, and these experiences have helped him to understand the culture of Western countries. In addition, he has finished his doctor degree in Portugal, which helped him to get familiar with the environment. Actually, he was the person who had adjusted the best in Portugal among these 10 respondents. Similarly, respondent A also had a rich international experience before coming to Portugal. *"I have working experience in North Europe when I was young, and I have also worked in Hong Kong for 7 years."* Respondent D said *"I had some business trips before. I think these experiences let me understand how to deal with the problems in other countries."* The previous experiences facilitate interaction and the ability to socialize with the host country so that expatriates can deal with the problems in the host country more quickly because they have the knowledge of the environment and the culture.

General knowledge about the host country can be obtained from learning and training. Cross-cultural training is evidently effective in helping the success of expatriate assignment, and it is one of the most essential factors for international adjustment (Littrell, 2006). It can be a key factor in avoiding failure, promoting assignment success, and increasing business performance, if the training is effectively provided and managed (Bennett, 2000). That is the reason why organizations provide cross-cultural training to expatriates as per the comments of the interviewees: *"The Company provided the training about how to adapt to the overseas life, and some tips about the country. This training helped me to adapt to the new environment easily"* (*See Annexes 7.2 respondent F3*). *"I received training about culture, custom, and overview of the country and some training about the working styles and process of the*

target country" (See Annexes 7.2 respondent F3). "I have had English training and general knowledge training before. After the training, I need to access the test which is organized by my company. This training helped me have a general knowledge about Portugal, and the knowledge facilitated me to adapt to the new environment at the beginning" (See Appendix respondent I3).

However, many companies cannot provide effective and enough training for their employees. Some companies do not have a perfect cross-cultural training system and lack the evaluation about the training. Even some companies do not give any international training for expatriates as it was, for instances, the case of respondent C: *I did not have much time to prepare before I came to Portugal. My company only provided me with a general situation of the country. Most of the knowledge about Portugal was learned by myself.*

4.4. Cultural differences

In the chapter of theoretical review, the concept of culture was introduced as the collective programming of the mind which distinguishes members of one group of people from another (Hofstede 2005). Schein (1992) also conducted experiences among different groups of people and found that the more cultural distance between the new culture and the expatriate own culture, the more difficult it is to adjust to the new environment. Expatriates tend to experience more challenges in an environment that has big cultural differences from their own.

There are many differences between Eastern cultures and Western cultures, either in thinking ways, language, personal values, or even life styles. From the information collected from the 10 respondents, the cultural differences that produce the most negative effects mainly refer to the working style and leisure ways.

In terms of working style difference, respondent B shared *"…due to the small scale of administration, many things I need to do by myself, which is different from China where I had a teaching assistant to help me."* It is also found that the Portuguese usually do not have sense of time, which produces many puzzles for the expatriates at the beginning. Respondents E and G mentioned the slow pace of Portuguese and also, the thinking and communicating in ways that are different between the two groups. Respondent E said: *"in the technical areas, European people have different views and points to see the problems sometimes. This is the difference in thinking ways".* Respondent F shared that *"the Portuguese speak directly and stubbornly. At the beginning, I was maladjusted because I did not know that, and sometimes I felt sad."* *"The Portuguese pay more attention to personal life and put the work behind. When they face some working problems now, they may deal with them any other day. Sometimes the differences are from thinking ways. The experiences of dealing with the differences can help me to get the knowledge of international experience" (respondent D).*

It was common that the interviewed Chinese expatriates though that there were few entertainment ways in Portugal and sometimes they felt bored by the lack of entertainment facilities and relaxing ways. *"The frequent entertainment way for me is to travel to the villages around Lisbon. Sometimes I feel bored" (respondent C). "I have more personal time. But I feel bored sometimes" (respondent E). "The life here is not that wonderful and colorful" (respondent F). "At the beginning I spent my leisure time to travel near Lisbon. But I feel bored now because I do not know where I can go" (respondent G). It is too boring in Portugal, the entertainment here is only Internet, play cards, and go to the park. By contrast, I have many colleagues in China, we can travel, sing and do a lot things together" (respondent H). "The life here is very simple. The entertainment for me consists in exercising, like football, basketball and running. There are more choices in China" (respondent I). "Compared with China, there are fewer facilities and places for entertainment, and I have fewer*

friends here"(respondent J).

However, compared with other European countries, there are more common factors with China. Respondent A said *"I think Portugal is the country which is the most similar to China among Western countries. For example, comparing with other people in Western countries, the Portuguese consume more rice and they like to eat sunflower seeds, which is similar to Chinese people. What i's more, the family values are also very important in Portugal, they often have family parties."* Similarly, respondent J expressed *"I think the Portuguese are easy going, tend to be persuaded, and not stubborn. Also, there are many similarities between Chinese and Portuguese, like the conception between superior and subordinate, they also consider the seniority and the position level."* From this point, it seems easier for Chinese expatriates to adjust to the life and work in Portugal.

4.5. Interpersonal competence

The ability of building relationships with others is important in both life and work, especially in multiple cultural countries or in a new environment. Relational competence was considered as a necessary factor by many respondents in these interviews. One of the expatriates who has rich international experience and adjusts well in Portugal said, *"From the previous experiences, I think the best way to adapt to another country is to integrate into local life and contact with local people. It is an essential strategy to adapt to the local environment"* (See Annexes 7.2 respondent F3). If people are willing to share their opinions and lives with others, they will pay attention to the common things they have, rather than on the differences.

An important factor in intercultural relationship ability is communication. That is why people who are open minded usually adjust better in the host country, like the case of respondent E. Also, the English language ability plays an essential role in

communication. The one who speaks English better can communicate easier with others.

Another important factor is the capacity to socialize with local people and build relationships with them. Respondent F is a good example of building relationships with local people, as he is married with a Portuguese. *"I married with a Portuguese. So I have a lot of chances to contact with Portuguese. I think Portuguese are friendly and they are not exclusive. It is good for others to adapt to the environment in Portugal"*. A good interacting strategy is to find the same interests as local people, like football. Portuguese love football very much, if this is your favorite sport, you will have many common topics with local people. Respondent C said: *"they like football very much, we usually watch the football in the restaurant. I have more Portuguese friends than Chinese here."*

However, most of these Chinese respondents did not do well in interacting with local people, rather they tend to build a new Chinese community in the new environment, other than integrating in it. When asked "The people you contact with in your daily life, are they more Chinese or more Portuguese?" They usually said "more Chinese". *"Chinese. I contact with foreigners mainly in the course of working and when talking about technical topics. After work, I have little opportunity to contact with foreigners"* (respondent D). *"Chinese. I rarely contact with foreigners after work"* (respondent E). *"At the beginning, they guided me to travel in and around Lisbon. After that, I almost contact only with Chinese after work"* (respondent G). *"There are more foreigners in my work environment but more Chinese in personal life"* (respondent J). They build their own community in Portugal, including patronizing Chinese restaurants, shops, hairdressers and diverse entertainment ways, which is not helping them to interact in the new environment and build strong relationships with local people.

4.6. Support

In answering these research questions, the support from company and family were repeated by these respondents. The support by the organization usually comes from co-workers, fellow expatriates, supervisors, and facilities the companies provide. It was found that social support from supervisors and fellow co-workers serves as a stress buffer for expatriates (Black and Porter 1991). The support from organizations will lead to job satisfaction and job adjustment for expatriates. Respondent D shared that *"my colleagues and me, we can relax together. During the Chinese Spring Festival, there was only me to stay in Lisbon, I felt sad and lonely."*

Most Chinese companies do well in supporting their employees as they usually provide housing and other facilities for the expatriates. Some organizations adopt a strong take-care policy for the expatriates and their families, including paying utility bills, rentals, accommodation or medical insurance. Every weekend some companies may organize sport games for employees, like HUAWEI, Bank of China, and State Grid. Also the salary provided in international assignments is usually higher than in China. Respondent G said that one reason why he came to Portugal was because *"the bonus for expatriates was attractive."* It was found that the interviews, in general, perceived management as supportive and rewarding efforts, so they tend to be more committed to achieving their goals.

Another necessary support is from family members. We can image how hard it is if the family members oppose the expatriate to working abroad. It is one of the reasons why organizations have a propensity to select expatriates who are single. The family factor plays a significant role in people's intercultural assignment. Most of the respondents have the support from their family members. When asked "how about the role your family members had in your overseas working experience? Positive or negative?" Respondent B said *"They support me. My family members stay with me in*

Portugal". "My husband also has business trips frequently. The communication tools are very convenient, we can contact at any time. We get married for a few years, and have good relationship with each other" (respondent E). "I am single. And I have a sister in China, so my parents have no influence in my working" (respondent I). "We already adjusted to the situation of living in different places. Also, my company has allowance for my family members if they want to accompany with me (respondent J)". However, when faced with family opposition, the international assignment will be strongly influenced. Respondent D said *"My child was just born, and he was ill. My family needs me, but I cannot help, I feel depressed".* In this situation, it is hard for the respondent to adjust to the intercultural assignment. Similarly, *"the influence of my family is big because my child is just three months. My wife and my child need me to look after them",* respondent G shared.

4.7. Performance

Job factors have great impact on working adjustment in terms of the three types of adjustments defined by Black (1991). When working in a new environment, employees often have to deal with new operations, new tasks, and working styles. During the process of adjustment to the new working environment, the one who adjust better will have better job performance.

When working in a new environment, the one who can change the working style accordingly will adjust quickly and show good performance. Respondent B who adjusts well in Portugal said, *"I think I am qualified for the job. ··The teaching style is different. I need to change the teaching ways based on the characteristics of international students."*

According to the interviews, the problems of working adjustments usually appear at the beginning of the assignment. *"At the beginning, I have some difficulties because*

the job nature has changed from technical to marketing. Some Portuguese speak English with strong accent" (Respondent F). "At the beginning, I needed to adjust to the new environment, at that time I have some difficulties" (respondent J).

As it was mentioned in the chapter of theoretical review, it is easier to adjust if the outside working tasks are similar with the ones he did before. By contrast, if there is much difference between the new job assignment and the previous one, the expatriates may experience a difficult time to adjust. Just like respondent F said *"I have some difficulties because the job nature has changed from technical to marketing".* On the contrary, respondent G who comes from the same company as F said *I do not think there are much challenges in my job. The problems are mainly from the technical side and are the same I would face in China. From this point of view, it is almost the same working in Portugal or in China".*

5. Conclusion

Based on the analysis of the interviews of the ten Chinese expatriates in Portugal, seven main factors have been analyzed according to the literature: language ability, personal traits, knowledge of environment, cultural difference, interpersonal competence, support, and performance. These elements were found to have great influence on the process of general adjustment, working adjustment, and interactive adjustment of Chinese expatriates in Portugal. Table 3 shows a summary of the findings of the research.

Table 3: Summary of the findings

Factors	Properties	Examples
Language ability	Host language ability is the basis for effective communication, which is essential element in cross-culture adjustment	*"I thought that my English is very good before I came to Portugal, but when I use it in everyday life, I found that I need to improve a lot. At the beginning, I was a little confused that I needed to think a few times to recall the technical words in English."(respondent E1)* *"I think there are some problems that bother me in the daily life, because many people in the shop do not know English. It is difficult to communicate with them." (respondent G1)* *Expatriates C, D, and G also mentioned that language is an important factor in cross-culture adjustment.*
Personality traits	It play an important role in expatriates' adjustment. In this research, we adopted the Big five factors: extroversion, agreeableness, conscientiousness, emotional stability	*"I am open minded and tend to accept new things, like traveling and have the ability of independent living. If you are a person who likes to stay at home, I think it is the same both working in China and overseas"(respondent J2). "I think it is suitable for me because I have an open mind. I like business trips because I can see the scenery of other countries" (respondent G2). "It is a good chance to enrich my experiences, to broaden eyes and the salary*

	and openness.	*is good. I can travel to other countries during the expatriate time" (respondent C2).* *"I like simple interpersonal relationships, so working here makes me feel comfortable" (respondent A2); "I like the direct and simple relationship between people, and I am also a straightforward person. So it is good for me to work here" (respondent C2).* *"I think if one person is too passive, he or she will be hard to adapt to the international life. Because, in a strange environment, many things need to be recognized in an active way" (respondent B2); "I am more introverted, and not good at communication. I tend to focus on the work itself. That is not good to integrate in the local life" (respondent C2).*
Knowledge of environment		*"I have more than ten year's international experiences"(Respondent B)* *"The Company provided the training about how to adapt to the overseas life, and some tips about the country. This training helped me to adapt the new environment easily" (respondent F3). "I received training about culture, custom, and overview of the country and some training about the working styles and process of the target country" (respondent F3). "I have had English training and general knowledge training before. After the training, I need to access the test which is organized by my company. This training helped me have a general knowledge about Portugal, and the knowledge facilitated me to adapt to the new environment at the beginning" (respondent I3).*
Interpersonal competence	It is the ability to choose a communication behavior that is both appropriate and effective for a given situation and establish a good	*"From the previous experiences, I think the best way to adapt to another country is to integrate into local life and contact with local people. It is an essential strategy to adapt to the local environment" (respondent F).* *"I married with a Portuguese. So I have a lot of chances to contact with Portuguese. I think*

	relationship with others.	*Portuguese are friendly and they are not exclusive. It is good for others to adapt to the environment in Portugal" (respondent F).*
Support	It means the supports from both organizations and families when expatriates stay in Portugal.	*"My colleagues together with me, we can relax together. During the Chinese Spring Festival, there was only me to stay in Lisbon, I felt sad and lonely" (Respondent D).* *"My husband also has business trips frequently. The communication tools are very convenient, we can contact at any time. We get married for a few years, and have good relationship with each other" (respondent E). "I am single. And I have a sister in China, so my parents have no influence in my working" (respondent I). "We already adjusted to the situation of living in different places. Also, my company has allowance for my family members if they want to accompany with me (respondent J)".* *"The influence of my family is big because my child just is three months. My wife and my child need me to look after them"(respondent G)*
Performance	When working in a new environment, the one who can change the working style accordingly will adjust quickly and show good performance.	*"I think I am qualified for the job. ⋯The teaching style is different. I need to change the teaching ways based on the characteristics of international students" (respondent B).* *"At the beginning, I have some difficulties because the job nature has changed from technical to marketing. Some Portuguese speak English with strong accent" (Respondent F).* *"At the beginning, I needed to adjust to the new environment, at that time I have some difficulties" (respondent J).*
Cultural difference	It is the collective programming of the mind which distinguishes members of one group or category of people from another	*"⋯due to the small scale of administration, many things I need to do by myself, which is different from China where I had a teaching assistant to help me" (respondent B).* *"In the technical areas, European people have different views and points to see the problems sometimes. This is the difference in thinking ways" (respondent E).*

		"The Portuguese speak directly and stubbornly. At the beginning, I was maladjusted because I did not know that, and sometimes I felt sad." *"The Portuguese pay more attention to personal life and put the work behind. When they face some working problems now, they may deal with them any other day. Sometimes the differences are from thinking ways. The experiences of dealing with the differences can help me to get the knowledge of international experience" (respondent D).* *"I think Portugal is the country which is the most similar to China among Western countries. For example, comparing with other people in western countries, the Portuguese consume more rice and they like to eat sunflower seeds which is similar to Chinese people. What's more, the family values are also very important in Portugal, they often have family parties" (respondent A). "I think the Portuguese are easy going, tend to be persuaded, and not stubborn. Also, there are many similarities between Chinese and Portuguese, like the conception between superior and subordinate, they also consider the seniority and the position level"(respondent J)*

Language ability, personal traits and interpersonal competence are the elements that come from expatriates themselves and they are the primary elements that organizations consider when selecting those for assignments abroad. Most of the Chinese expatriates in Portugal can speak English well. However, personal traits and interpersonal competence are more difficult to evaluate them than language ability. Hence, the organizations should take more measures to assess the personal characteristics and interpersonal competences. For example, the companies could provide a longer period of preparation and evaluation to expatriates before deploying them on inter-cultural assignments. This will give the organization enough time to evaluate whether an employee is suitable to working outside or not, and provide

enough time for the expatriate to acquire necessary information and ability of working in the host country.

Knowledge of the host country also plays an important role in expatriate adjustment. It produces significant effect on one's adaptability of international assignment. The knowledge of the host country can be acquired from the previous experiences of expatriates, learning and training. From the analysis of these respondents, it can be found that those who have previous experiences in cross-cultural environment are more qualified to adjust the new environment in Portugal, especially if those experiences had been in Portugal. Providing cross-cultural training before the expatriates' execution of the international assignment can help them adjust better in Portugal. However, many of these Chinese companies did not provide enough and effective training to employees. Some of these ten expatriates even did not have any training before coming to Portugal. Hence, the Chinese organizations should do more efforts in expatriates training. This will produce a positive effect on Chinese expatriates working in Portugal.

In terms of the support from companies and families, the results show that such support will generates as significant effect on expatriate adjustment. From the response of these ten expatriates, we know that the Chinese companies did well in providing support to their employees as this can help expatriates have a better living and working condition in Portugal. The support from family is also very important, although not every expatriate is able to guarantee this kind of support. From the experiences of the respondents, we found that those expatriates who had just married or had a child, usually suffer more in the international assignment. By contrast, those whose family members have accompanied them usually adjust better in Portugal.

Following Hofstede's definition, culture is the collective programming of the mind, which distinguishes members of one group of people from another (Hofstede 2005). Essentially, the cultural difference between Chinese and Portuguese are the difference

between Eastern and Western cultures. There are many differences between these two countries, such as in ways of thinking ways, language, living styles, and food. As we know from the chapter on the theoretical review, the difference between home and host culture will produce effects on people when their lives have changed. The farther the culture distance is, the more difficulties expatriates will have. Hence, the Chinese expatriates usually suffer a huge change when they come to Portugal both in life and in work. Interestingly and fortunately, from the response of the Chinese expatriates, some of them think that there are many similarities between Chinese and Portuguese, that is compared with other European countries, the culture in Portugal is more similar with China. From this perspective, the adjustment difficulties of Chinese expatriates may be be reduced in Portugal.

Bibliography

Aaron W. Andreason, (2003). Expatriate adjustment to foreign assignment. *International Journal of Commerce and Management.* 13(1), 42-60.

Anderson. J. R. The architecture of cognition. *Cambridge, Mass: Harvard Univ. Press, 1983.*

Babbie, E. 2010. The practice of social research. *London: Wadsworth Cengage Learning.*

Babiker, I. E., Cox, J. L., & Miller, P. M. (1980). The measurement of cultural distance and its relationship to medical consultations, symptomatology and examination of performance of overseas students at Edinburgh University. *Social Psychiatry*, 15, 109–116.

Black, J S (1988) Work role transitions: a study of American expatriate managers in Japan. *Journal of International Business Studies,* 19 (2), 277–94.

Black, S J & Stephens, G K (1989) 'The Influence of The Spouse on American Expatriate Adjustment and intent to stay in Pacific Rim overseas Assignments'. *Journal of Management,* 15 (4), 529-44.

Black, J. S., & Gregersen, H. B. (1991). Antecedents to cross-cultural adjustment for expatriates in Pacific Rim assignments. *Human Relations*, 44(5), 497-515.

Black, J.S., Gregersen, H.B., Mendenhall, M.E. & Stroh, L.K. (1999). Globalizing People through International Assignments. *Reading, Massachusetts: Addison-Wesley.*

Black, J. S., & Porter, L. W. (1991). Managerial behavior and job performance: A successful manager in Los Angeles may not be successful in Hong Kong .*International Journal of Business Studies*, 22(1), 99-113.

Caligiuri, P. M. (2000a). Selecting expatriates for personality characteristics: A moderating effect of personality on the relationship between host nation contact and cross-cultural adjustment. *Management International Review*, 40(1), 61-80.

Caligiuri, P. (2000b). The big five personality characteristics as predictors of expatriate's desire to terminate the assignment and supervisor rated performance. *Personnel Psychology,* 53(1), 68-77.

Caligiuri, P., Philips, J., Lazarova, M., Tarique, I., & Burgi, P. (2001). The theory of

met expectations applied to expatriate adjustment: The role of cross cultural training. *International Journal of Human Resource Management*, 12(3), 357-372.

Copeland, A. P. & Norell, S. K. (2002). Spousal adjustment on international assignments: The role of social support. *International Journal of Intercultural Relations*, 26 (3), 255-272.

Cattell, R. B. (1945a). The description of personality: Principles and findings in a factor analysis. *American Journal of Psychology*, 58, 69-90.

Cattell, R. B. (1945b). The principle trait clusters for describing personality. *Psychological Bulletin,* 42, 129-161.

Creswell, J. W. (1994). Research design: Qualitative and quantitative approaches. *Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE Publications.*

Downes, M., Varner, I. I., & Musinski, L. (2007). Personality traits as predictors of expatriate effectiveness: A synthesis and reconceptualization. *Review of Business*, 27(3), 16–23.

Dowling, Peter & Welch, Denice. (2005). International human resource management: Managing people in an international context (4thed.). *Mason, OH: South-Western.*

Garcia-Vazquez, E., Moran, P., Perez, J., Martinez, J.L, Izquierdo, J.I., De Gaudemar, B. & Beall, E. 2002. Interspecific barriers between salmonids when hybridisation is due to sneak mating. *Heredity.*

Goldberg, L. R. (1981). Language and individual differences: The search for universals in personality lexicons. *Review of personality and social psychology.*

Goldberg, L.R. (1990). Alternative "Description of Personality": The Big-Five Factor Structure. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology.*

Graf, A (2004). Expatriate selection: An empirical study identifying significant skill profiles. *Thunderbird International Business Review*, 46: 667-685.

Grant-Vallone, E. J. & Ensher, E. A., (2000). Longitudinal examination of mentoring relationships on organizational commitment and citizenship behavior. *Journal of Career Development,* 26(4), 233–249.

Hofstede, G. & Hofstede, G. J. (2005). Cultures and Organizations: Software of the Mind (Rev.   2nded.). *New York: McGraw-Hill.*

Hesse, M. (1980). Revolution and reconstruction in the philosophy of science. *Bloomington, Indiana: Indiana University Press*.

Huang, T. J., Chi, S., & Lawler, J. J. (2005). The relationship between expatriates' personality traits and their adjustment to international assignments. *International Journal of Human Resources Management*, 16(9), 1656-1670.

Kittler M, Rygl D, Mackinnon A & Wiedemann K (2011). Work Role and Work Adjustment in Emerging Markets: a study of German expatriates in CEE countries and Russia. *Cross Cultural Management: An International Journal,* 18 (2), pp. 165-184.

Lee, L. & Sukoco, B. M. (2010). The effects of cultural intelligence on expatriate performance: The moderating effects of international experience. *The International Journal of Human Resource Management,* 21o(7), 963-981.

Livermore, D. (2007). Leading with cultural intelligence: The new secret to success. *New York: AMACOM*.

Littrell, L. N., Salas, E., Hess, K. P., Paley, M. & Riedel, S. (2006). Expatriate preparation: A critical analysis of 25 years of cross-cultural training research. *Human Resource Development Review,* 5 (3), 355-388.

Martens DM (2003). Mixed methods and the politics of human research: The transformative emancipatory perspective. *Handbook of mixed methods research.*

Mayring, Philipp (2003). Qualitative Inhaltsanalyse, Grundlagen und Techniken (8th ed.). *Weinheim: Beltz, UTB*.

McGinley, J. (2008). Expatriate adjustment within a social context: Examination of a sample in Russia. *Journal of Social, Evolutionary, and cultural Psychology,* 2(2), 56-68.

Mendenhall, M. Dunbar, E and Oddou, G (1987) Expatriate selection, training and career pathing: a review and critique, *Human Resources Management.*

Mertens, D. M. (2005). Research and evaluation in education and psychology: Integrating diversity with quantitative, qualitative, and mixed methods. (2nded.). *California, CA: Sage*.

Merriam, S.B. (1998). Qualitative research and case study applications in education. *San Francisco: Jossey-Bass*.

Miles, M. B., & Huberman, A. M. (1994). An expanded source book: Qualitative data analysis. (2nded.). *Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage*.

Michael Quinn Patton (2002). Qualitative Research & Evaluation Methods. Thousand Oaks, 430-435.

Morley, M J & Flynn, M (2003). The relationship between work-role characteristics and intercultural transitional adjustment domain patterns among a sample of US and Canadian expatriates on assignment in Ireland. *Cross Cultural Management,* 10 (3), 42–57.

Oberg, K. (1960). Culture shock: Adjustment to new cultural environments. *Practical Anthologist*, 7, 177-182.

Peltokorpi, V., & Froese, F. J. (2009). Organizational expatriates and self-initiated expatriates: Who adjusts better to work and life in Japan? *The International Journal of Human Resource Management*, 20(5), 1096-1112.

Ramalu, S., Rose, R.C. & Uli, J. (2010). Personality and Cross-Cultural Adjustment among Expatriate Assignees in Malaysia. *International Business Research*, 3 (4), 96-104.

Raduan, C., Ramalu, S., Uli, J., & Kumar, N. (2010). Expatriate performance in overseas assignment: The role of the big five personality. *Asian Social Science,* 6(9), 104-113.

Ratner, C. (1997). Cultural Psychology and Qualitative Methodology: Theoretical & Empirical Considerations.

Ratner C. (2002). Cultural Psychology: Theory and Method.

Schein, E. H. (1985). Organizational Culture and Leadership (1sted.). *San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.*

Schwartz, S H (2006) Basic human values. http://151.97.110.134/Allegati/convegno%207-8-10-05/Schwartzpaper.pdf

Selmer, J. (1999). Adjustment to Hong Kong: US v. European expatriate. *Human Resource Management Journal,* 9(3), 83-93.

Selmer, J. (2006). Language ability and adjustment: Western expatriate in China. *Thunderbird International Business Review,* 48(3), 347-368.

Shaffer, M. A., Harrison, D. A., Gregersen, H., Black, J. S., & Ferzandi, L. A. (2006).

You can take it with you: Individual differences and expatriate effectiveness. *Journal of Applied Psychology,* 91(1), 109-125.

Shaffer, M. A., Harrison, D. A., & Gilley, K. M. (1999). Dimensions, determinants, and differences in the expatriate adjustment process. *Journal of International Business Studies,* 30(3): 557-581.

Silverman, David (2005). Doing qualitative research: a practical handbook (2nd ed.). *London: Sage.*

Stroh, L.K. and Caligiuri, P.M. (1998). Increasing global competitiveness through effective people management. *Journal of World Business,* 33: 111–124.

Swagler, M. A. & Jome, L.M. (2005). The effects of personality and acculturation on the adjustment of North American sojourners in Taiwan. *Journal of Counselling Psychology*, 52 (4), 527-536.

Takeuchi, R., Tesluk, P. E., Yun, S., & Lepak, D. P. (2005). An integrative view of international experience. *Academy of Management Journal,* 48(1), 85-100.

Takeuchi, R., Seokhwa Yun, Joyce E.A.Russel. (2002). Antecedents and consequences of the perceived adjustment of Japanese expatriates in USA. *International Journal of Human Resource Management.*

Tajfel, H. (1979). Individuals and groups in social psychology. *British Journal of Social and Clinical Psychology.*

Taylor, S. J. P., & Bogdan, R. (1998). Introduction to qualitative research methods: A guidebook and resources. *New York: John Wiley & Sons.*

Ting-Toomey, S. & Chung, L. C. (2005). Understanding Intercultural Communication. *Los Angeles: Roxbury Publishing Company.*

Tupes, E. C ,& Christal, R.E.(1961). Recurrent personality factors based on trait Ratings (USAFASDTech.Rep.No.61-97). *Lackland Air Force Base, TX: U.S. AirForce.*

Ward, C., & Kennedy, A. (1993a). Psychological and socio-cultural adjustment during cross-cultural transitions. *An International Journal of Psychology,* 28(2), 129-148.

Wang, M., & Takeuchi, R. (2007). The role of goal orientation during expatriation: A cross sectional and longitudinal investigation. *Journal of Applied Psychology,* 92(2), 1437-1445.

Young Yun Kim, (1994). Becoming Intercultural: An Integrative Theory of Communication and Cross-cultural adaptation. *Sage publications, Inc.* p238.

Annexes

7.1 General Interview Guide

7.1.1 General Interview Guide in English

Personal information: Name   Gender   Age
                           Province of China   Academic background

1. When you come to Portugal?
2. How well do you speak English or Portuguese?
3. Do you have any other expatriate experiences? And when and where?
4. Why you choose to work in Portugal?
5. Did you receive some special training before you come to Portugal? If so, what kind of training? Do you think it matches the needs to work in Portugal or do you have any suggestions?
6. What are the challenges you facing here?

General adjustment
1. How you feel about the living conditions in Portugal?
2. How you feel about the housing conditions and food?
3. The differences about cost of living.
4. About the entertainment, do you have more time or opportunities to relax? What kind of leisure activities do you have in Portugal and how do they differ from those you had in China?
5. How about the health care services in Portugal?
6. What are the main culture shocks you have experienced in Portugal? Can you tell me any interesting story you remember?

Interactive adjustment
1. The people you contact with in your daily life, more Chinese or more Portuguese?
2. In your daily life, what are the main reasons you interact with non-Chinese?
3. Except working, do you have any other actives with non-Chinese?

Job adjustment
1. What are the main responsibilities about your job?
2. The biggest challenges in your job.
3. What are the expectations in your future job? And how about your performance?
4. What are the main differences between Portuguese and Chinese working style?

Personal factors

1. Do you think it is suitable for oversea working, in terms of your personal characteristics? And what personalities do you think are not suitable in working in others countries? Why?

2. How about the roles of your family members made in your oversea working experience? Positive or negative?

3. Some other questions about personal information.

According to different respondents and different situations, there are some openness and more deep questions to them.

7.1.2 General Interview Guide in Chinese

亲爱的在葡同胞：

您好，我是 ISCTE-IUL 人力资源管理专业硕士研究生刘虹宇，目前进行中国外派人员在国外适应性问题的研究，作为我的毕业论文课题。本次调查采用访谈形式，您在葡国的工作生活经历与感受将对我的论文写作提供非常重要的帮助，谢谢您的参与！

<div align="right">

刘虹宇

2014 年 4 月

</div>

总体情况：

姓名、年龄、学历、参加工作时间、来葡萄牙时间、英语或者葡语水平

关于适应性的问题：

General adjustment

1、总的来说，您感觉葡萄牙的生活条件怎么样？

2、居住条件如何？与国内相比感觉如何？

3、食物方面，感觉适应吗？与国内相比感觉如何？

4、消费购物方面习惯吗？与国内相比感觉如何？

5、娱乐休闲方面习惯吗？在这里主要的娱乐方式是什么，与国内比有什么不同？

6、医疗卫生服务方面感觉如何？与国内相比感觉如何？

7、生活开支方面与国内有何不同？

8、在这边遇到过因为文化差异而产生的误会、或者有趣的事？ 可以讲一些这样的例子吗？

Interactive adjustment

1、您在这边的圈子更多是中国人还是外国人？

2、日常生活中与外国人的交集主要是什么？

3、除了工作以外，您和外国人有没有其他的活动？

4、您和外国人交流的多吗？

Job adjustment

1、您工作的主要职责是什么？

2、您对您的工作有什么期望？您感觉自己工作中的业绩如何？

3、工作中感觉顺手吗？和国内相比，这边面临的挑战是什么？

4、 来葡萄牙之前受到过什么针对性的培训？如果有是什么样的培训？这样的培训对在葡萄牙工作帮助大吗？ 有什么建议？

5、对您来说，在葡萄牙工作最大的挑战是什么？

6、之前有没有海外工作或者留学的经历？是什么原因让您选择来葡萄牙工作？

关于个人的问题：

1、是否结婚？家庭因素对外派工作有什么影响？

2、您感觉您的性格适合在国外工作吗？为什么？

7.2 Transcription of the interviews

Interview A

Gender: Male Age: 51 Marital status: Married Province of China: Shenzhen Academic background:	
When did come to Portugal?	
Two years ago	
How well do you speak English or Portuguese?	
Fluent, and some Portuguese	
Do you have any other expatriate experiences? When and where?	
I have the working experiences in North Europe when I was young, and worked in Hong Kong for 7 years. This is one of the reason why I can be selected to work in Portugal.	A4
Why you choose to work in Portugal?	
I worked here because the demand of the organization and I have the oversea working experiences.	
Did you receive some special training before you come to Portugal? If so, what kind of training? Do you think it matches the needs to work in Portugal or do you have any suggestions?	
No	
How you feel about the living conditions in Portugal? Like housing conditions, food.	
I am satisfied with the living conditions here. Food are more reliable and I used to eat western food. My organization provides the house for me.	A6
The differences about cost of living compare with China?	
A little less than the cost of China, because I do not have much cost in social consume, like penny wedding.	
About the entertainment, do you have more time or opportunities to relax? What kind of leisure activities do you have in Portugal and how do they differ from those you had in China?	
The ways of entertainment are less than China, but I have more leisure time to relax. So I can do more relax and my life are more colorful.	A8
How about the health care services in Portugal?	
I really know a little about health care here because I never went to hospital before in Portugal.	
What are the main culture shocks you have experienced in Portugal? Can you tell me any interesting story you remember?	
I think Portugal is the country which similar to China most among western countries. For examples, comparing with other people in western countries, the Portuguese consume more rice. And they like to eat sunflower seeds which is resemble Chinese people. What's more, the family values are also very	A8

important in Portugal, they often have family party.	
The people you contact with in your daily life, more Chinese or more Portuguese?	
Half and half, but I have more Chinese friends.	A5
In your daily life, what are the main reasons you interact with non-Chinese?	
Working	
What are the main responsibilities about your job?	
The biggest challenges in your job	
The main challenges are from the misleading of superior departments from China, because they usually cannot fully understand the customs and manners of Portugal. For instance, there is an emergency task you need to finish, and hand up to the superior department. But Portuguese people have their own working style and pace, you need to wait for them. Then, your superiors will think you have some troubles or you are not working hard.	A7
What are the main differences between Portuguese and Chinese working style?	
They balance working and life well.	
Do you think it is suitable for oversea working, in terms of your personal characteristics? And what personalities do you think are not suitable in working in others countries? Why?	A8
Yes. I like simple interpersonal relationship, so working here makes me feel comfortable.	A2
How about the roles of your family members made in your oversea working experience? Positive or negative?	
My son study in British. We family can get together in sometimes. There is little influence to my job.	A6

Interview B

Gender: Male Age: Marital status: Married Province of China: Guang Dong Academic background: Doctor	
When did come to Portugal?	
August. 2013	
How well do you speak English or Portuguese?	
Fluent English	
Do you have any other expatriate experiences? When and where?	
I have more than ten years' international experiences. I finish my master degree in UK and PhD at ISCTE-IUL, and some working experiences in America, Australia and some Europe countries.	B3 B4
Why you choose to work in Portugal?	
There are two main reasons. First, in order to provide better education for my child. Second, I like the peaceful life in Europe. Also, it is a good chance to have diversified career development, and increase personal experiences.	

Did you receive some special training before you come to Portugal? If so, what kind of training? Do you think it matches the needs to work in Portugal or do you have any suggestions?	
How you feel about the living conditions in Portugal? Like housing conditions, food.	
The differences about cost of living compare with China?	
In general, it is more cost-effective in Portugal.	
About the entertainment, do you have more time or opportunities to relax? What kind of leisure activities do you have in Portugal and how do they differ from those you had in China?	
I have more personal time and more opportunities to do things I like.	
How about the health care services in Portugal?	
The relationship between doctors and patients are more harmonious.	
What are the main culture shocks you have experienced in Portugal? Can you tell me any interesting story you remember?	
The people you contact with in your daily life, more Chinese or more Portuguese?	
More foreigners. Some of them are my colleagues, and some are the people I recognized in daily life. From the previous experiences, I think the best way to adapt another country is integrate into local life and contact with local people. It is an essential strategy to adapt the local environment.	B5
In your daily life, what are the main reasons you interact with non-Chinese?	
Working.	
What are the main responsibilities about your job?	
Teaching and research. I think I am qualified for the job.	B7
What are the main differences between Portuguese and Chinese working style?	
First, the teaching style is different. I need to change the teaching ways based on the characteristics of international students. Seconds, due to the small scale of administration, many thing I need to do by myself, which is different from China, I have a teaching assistant to help me.	B8
Do you think it is suitable for oversea working, in terms of your personal characteristics? And what personalities do you think are not suitable in working in others countries? Why?	
Yes, I like the peaceful life here. I have more time to do the things I like, for instance, critical and independent thinking. And the culture provide a comfortable environment to do critical thinking. I think if one person is too passive, he or she will be hard to adapt the international life. Because many things in a strange environment need to be recognized in an active way.	B2
How about the roles of your family members made in your oversea working	

experience? Positive or negative?	
They support me. My family members stay with me in Portugal.	B6

Interview C

Gender: Male Age: 31 Marital status: Single Province of China: Hong Kong Academic background: Bachelor	
When did come to Portugal?	
1 year	
How well do you speak English or Portuguese?	
Fluent English and a little Portuguese. I think the language is a very important factor in cultural adjustment.	C1
Do you have any other expatriate experiences? When and where?	
No	
Why you choose to work in Portugal?	
Because of the Gold visa policy, my company need a person working in Portugal. Meanwhile, it is a good chance to rich my experiences, to broaden eyes and the salary is good. I can travel to other countries during the expatriate time.	C2
Did you receive some special training before you come to Portugal? If so, what kind of training? Do you think it matches the needs to work in Portugal or do you have any suggestions?	
I do not have much time to prepare before I come to Portugal. My company only provides a general situation of the country. Most of the knowledge about Portugal were learn by myself.	C3
How you feel about the living conditions in Portugal? Like housing conditions, food.	
It is good, and I used to eat western food. Actually, I am not a traditional Chinese people, for example, the food I eat tend to be western style.	C4
The differences about cost of living compare with China?	
The cost is a little more than China, just a little. Comparing with other Europe country, the commodity price is lower in Portugal.	C8
About the entertainment, do you have more time or opportunities to relax? What kind of leisure activities do you have in Portugal and how do they differ from those you had in China?	
Lacking of entertainment facilities and relax ways. The frequent entertainment way for me is to travel to the villages around Lisbon. Sometimes I fell boring.	C8
How about the health care services in Portugal?	
I know a little about the health care in Portugal. I am good in health, and the environment here is very good.	
What are the main culture shocks you have experienced in Portugal? Can you tell me any interesting story you remember?	
The people you contact with in your daily life, more Chinese or more	

Portuguese?	
I have more opportunity to contact with foreigners. And I have more Portuguese friends than Chinese here.	C5
In your daily life, what are the main reasons you interact with non-Chinese?	
Working, watching football, having dinner. They like football very much, we usually watch the football in the restaurant.	C5
What are the main responsibilities about your job?	
Help the person to apply for the Gold visa. Almost everything the clients encounter in Portugal I will help them to solve. Actually, I have more leisure time in working here, and the working time usually freedom.	
The biggest challenges in your job	
When many customers come to Portugal at the same time, I do not have much time and energy to serve them.	C7
What are the main differences between Portuguese and Chinese working style?	
Many Portuguese do not have sense of time.	
Do you think it is suitable for oversea working, in terms of your personal characteristics? And what personalities do you think are not suitable in working in others countries? Why?	
I like the direct and simple relationship between people, and I am also a straightforward person. So it is good for me to working here.	C2
How about the roles of your family members made in your oversea working experience? Positive or negative?	
I am single, so I do not have this problem. But sometimes I will miss my family members and friends. Anyway, I have the opportunities to go to China every year.	C6

Interview D

Gender: Male Age: 28 Marital status: Married Province of China: Academic background: Master	
When did come to Portugal?	
December 2013	
How well do you speak English or Portuguese?	
Fluent English	
Do you have any other expatriate experiences? When and where?	
Some business trip before. I think these experiences let me understand how to deal with the problems in other country.	D3
Why you choose to work in Portugal?	
I come to Portugal because of the job demand from my company.	
Did you receive some special training before you come to Portugal? If so, what kind of training? Do you think it matches the needs to work in Portugal or do you have any suggestions?	
Some training about English.	D3

How you feel about the living conditions in Portugal? Like housing conditions, food.	D6
My company provides house for me. I cook food myself, because the local food do not agree with me.	D4
The differences about cost of living compare with China?	
It is a little more expensive than China, but more cost-effective.	
About the entertainment, do you have more time or opportunities to relax? What kind of leisure activities do you have in Portugal and how do they differ from those you had in China?	
The entertainment methods and facilities are less than China, but I have more leisure time to exercise. It is healthier here. Meanwhile, my colleagues together with me, we can relax together. During the Chinese Spring Festival, there was only me stay in Lisbon, I feel sad and lonely. The healthy life philosophy here is better than the people in China, they like exercise very much. Live in this environment, I tend to have outdoor games in the leisure time.	D4 D6 D8
How about the health care services in Portugal?	
I am healthy.	
What are the main culture shocks you have experienced in Portugal? Can you tell me any interesting story you remember?	
The people you contact with in your daily life, more Chinese or more Portuguese?	
Chinese. I contact with foreigners mainly in working and talk about the technical topics. After work, I have little opportunity to contact with foreign.	D5
In your daily life, what are the main reasons you interact with non-Chinese?	
I contact with foreigners mainly in working and talk about the technical topics.	D5
What are the main responsibilities about your job?	
Technical support.	
The biggest challenges in your job	
Out company own 25% stake of REN. There are some difficulties in projects promoting, because they have different target between my company and REN.	D7
What are the main differences between Portuguese and Chinese working style?	
The Portuguese pay more attention to personal life and put the work behind. When they face some working problems now, they may deal with them other day. Sometimes the differences are from thinking ways. The experiences of deal with the differences can help me to get the knowledge of international experience.	D8
Do you think it is suitable for oversea working, in terms of your personal characteristics? And what personalities do you think are not suitable in working in others countries? Why?	
I am more introverted, and not good at communication. I tend to focus at work	D2

itself. That is not good to integrate in the local life.	
How about the roles of your family members made in your oversea working experience? Positive or negative?	
My child was just born, and he was ill. My family need me, but I cannot help, I feel depression.	D6

Interview E

Gender: Female Age: 31 Marital status: Married Province of China: Academic background: PHD	
When did come to Portugal?	
March 2014	
How well do you speak English or Portuguese?	
Fluent English. I think my English is very good before I come to Portugal, but when I use it in everyday life, I found that I need to improve a lot. At the beginning, I was a little confused that I need to think few time to recall the technical words in English.	E1
Do you have any other expatriate experiences? When and where?	
Some business trip before.	
Why you choose to work in Portugal?	
As the technical manager, I need to stay in Portugal for three months.	
Did you receive some special training before you come to Portugal? If so, what kind of training? Do you think it matches the needs to work in Portugal or do you have any suggestions?	
No. I came to Portugal directly without training.	E3
How you feel about the living conditions in Portugal? Like housing conditions, food.	
I do not like the food here. There are more meat in the dinner.	E4
The differences about cost of living compare with China?	
More cost-effective.	
About the entertainment, do you have more time or opportunities to relax? What kind of leisure activities do you have in Portugal and how do they differ from those you had in China?	
I have more changes to exercise, like running. In the environment which people like exercise, you will be infected. However, when I was in China, I do not have the exercise awareness. I have more personal time. But I feel boring sometimes.	E8
How about the health care services in Portugal?	
I am health.	
What are the main culture shocks you have experienced in Portugal? Can you tell me any interesting story you remember?	
The people you contact with in your daily life, more Chinese or more Portuguese?	

Chinese. I rarely contact with foreigners after work.	E5
In your daily life, what are the main reasons you interact with non-Chinese?	
In working and talk about the technical topics.	E5
What are the main responsibilities about your job?	
Project manager and technical support.	
The biggest challenges in your job	
I do not think there are some big challenges in my job now. Because the preliminary work of my team members did well. There is no other problems just following the working schedule.	E7
What are the main differences between Portuguese and Chinese working style?	
Portuguese used to have a slow pace of life. In the technical area, the Europe people have different views and point to see the problems sometime. This is the difference in thinking way.	E8
Do you think it is suitable for oversea working, in terms of your personal characteristics? And what personalities do you think are not suitable in working in others countries? Why?	
I am very independent and have strong adaptability. And I am willing to bear suffering. Also, I am easy to be satisfaction, what life give, I will accept it.	E2
How about the roles of your family members made in your oversea working experience? Positive or negative?	
There is no influence for me. My husband also have business trip frequently. The communication tools are very convenient, we can contact at any time. We get married for few years, and have good relationship with each other.	E6

Interview F

Gender: Female Age: 31 Marital status: Married with a Portuguese Province of China: Academic background: Bachelor	
When did come to Portugal?	
I came to Portugal from the end of 2011.	
How well do you speak English or Portuguese?	
Fluent English	
Do you have any other expatriate experiences? When and where?	
I had some business trip in other Europe countries before I came to Portugal. These experiences help me adapt the life in Lisbon easier. I also remember the first time I go abroad, I was very nervous because I do not know everything about France.	F3 F4
Why you choose to work in Portugal?	
I worked at Shanghai for three years. It was very tired because I have to go business trip frequently. I do not have much friends in Shanghai, and the pressure of life was huge. So, I applied to work in Portugal for a long time.	
Did you receive some special training before you come to Portugal? If so, what kind of training? Do you think it matches the needs to work in Portugal	

or do you have any suggestions?	
The company provided the training about how to adapt the oversea life, and some tips about the country. These training help me to adapt the new environment easily.	F3
How you feel about the living conditions in Portugal? Like housing conditions, food.	
I feel good. I can accept the Portuguese food, but not that like. I cooked myself.	
The differences about cost of living compare with China?	
I think the cost between them almost same. The prices are a little higher than China, but the expenditure in others reduced, like the wedding ceremony.	
About the entertainment, do you have more time or opportunities to relax? What kind of leisure activities do you have in Portugal and how do they differ from those you had in China?	
The life here are not that wonderful and colorful. But it does not has effect on me, because I am a Technology curtilage. I usually go home after working, this is the same as I was in China.	F8
How about the health care services in Portugal?	
I do not know much about it. The Chinese people have a little chance to go to hospital, because the good environment and quality food, and they usually take many medicine when they come to Portugal.	
What are the main culture shocks you have experienced in Portugal? Can you tell me any interesting story you remember?	
I think Portuguese are friendly and they are not exclusive. It is good for others adapt the environment in Portugal.	F5
The people you contact with in your daily life, more Chinese or more Portuguese?	
I married with Portuguese. So I have a lot of chance to contact with Portuguese. Also, I have many Chinese friends.	F5
In your daily life, what are the main reasons you interact with non-Chinese?	
Both working and life. Because my husband is Portuguese.	
What are the main responsibilities about your job?	
Commercial management.	
The biggest challenges in your job	
At the beginning, I have some difficulties because the job nature have changed from technique to marketing. Some Portuguese speak English with strong accent.	F7
What are the main differences between Portuguese and Chinese working style?	
The Portuguese speak directly and stubborn. At the beginning, I was maladjustment because I do not know that, sometime felt sad. They are excusive to foreigners.	F8
Do you think it is suitable for oversea working, in terms of your personal	

characteristics? And what personalities do you think are not suitable in working in others countries? Why?	
I think am good at working outside. I like stay alone, so the condition almost the same in different countries for her. I think one important factor of personal characteristics is inclusive. You need to understand others because you have different culture, different thinking ways, and communication methods.	F2
How about the roles of your family members made in your oversea working experience? Positive or negative?	
My husband is Portuguese.	F6

Interview G

Gender: Male Age: 29 Marital status: Married Province of China: Shandong Academic background: Master	
When did come to Portugal?	
I come to Portugal since April 2014.	
How well do you speak English or Portuguese?	
Fluent English.	
Do you have any other expatriate experiences? When and where?	
I have some experiences of business trip. It is helpful for me to adjust the environment outside. I also remember the time when I first go abroad. It was terrible because the problems of communication, living and jet lag. With the increase of expatriate experiences I improved a lot.	G3 G4
Why you choose to work in Portugal?	
I do not like to stay in front of the desk, I want to open my view. The bonus of expatriating are attractive.	
Did you receive some special training before you come to Portugal? If so, what kind of training? Do you think it matches the needs to work in Portugal or do you have any suggestions?	
The training about culture, custom, and overview of the country. And some training about the working styles and process of the target country.	G3
How you feel about the living conditions in Portugal? Like housing conditions, food.	
Because I am the short-term assignments, I did not adjust the western food well.	
The differences about cost of living compare with China?	
It is more experience than I stay in China. Because I just come to Portugal, everything I need to buy and I tend to convert EUR to RMB.	
About the entertainment, do you have more time or opportunities to relax? What kind of leisure activities do you have in Portugal and how do they differ from those you had in China?	
At the beginning I spent my leisure time to travel near Lisbon. But I feel boring now because I do not where I can go.	G8
How about the health care services in Portugal?	

What are the main culture shocks you have experienced in Portugal? Can you tell me any interesting story you remember?	
The people you contact with in your daily life, more Chinese or more Portuguese?	
There are more foreigner I contact in working.	
In your daily life, what are the main reasons you interact with non-Chinese?	
At the beginning, they guided me to travel in and around Lisbon. After that, I almost contact only with Chinese after work.	G5
What are the main responsibilities about your job?	
Technical support.	
The biggest challenges in your job	
I do not think there are much challenges in my job. The problems mainly from technical which is the same I will face in China. From this point of view, it almost same working in Portugal and in China. And I think there are some problems bother me in the daily life, because many people in the shop do not know English. It is difficult to communicate with them.	G7 G1
What are the main differences between Portuguese and Chinese working style?	
The culture differences are not that much, but there are many differences in life styles, the Portuguese usually have slow-pace life.	G8
Do you think it is suitable for oversea working, in terms of your personal characteristics? And what personalities do you think are not suitable in working in others countries? Why?	
I think it is suitable for me because I have open mind. I like business trip because I can see the scenery of other countries.	G2
How about the roles of your family members made in your oversea working experience? Positive or negative?	
The influence of my family is big because my child just three months. My wife and my child need me to look after them.	G6

Interview H

Gender: Female Age: 30 Marital status: Married Province of China: Academic background: Bachelor	
When did come to Portugal?	
Since 2009.	
How well do you speak English or Portuguese?	
Fluent English	
Do you have any other expatriate experiences? When and where?	
I had business trip in America before I came to Portugal.	
Why you choose to work in Portugal?	
The weather here is very good. And the commodity price are lower than other	

Europe countries.	
Did you receive some special training before you come to Portugal? If so, what kind of training? Do you think it matches the needs to work in Portugal or do you have any suggestions?	
No.	
How you feel about the living conditions in Portugal? Like housing conditions, food.	
It is OK. The infrastructure facilities in Portugal are convenient. The living environment is more quite than China.	
The differences about cost of living compare with China?	
It is almost the same compare with Shenzhen of China. But materials are richer in China. Although the commodity price are higher than China, the costs of entertainment and social activities are less.	
About the entertainment, do you have more time or opportunities to relax? What kind of leisure activities do you have in Portugal and how do they differ from those you had in China?	
It is too boring in Portugal, the entertainment here only Internet, play cards and go to the park. By contrast, I have many colleagues in China, we can travel, singing and do a lot together.	H8
How about the health care services in Portugal?	
Although there are fewer patients in Portugal, it also takes a lot time to go to hospital, it is inefficient.	
What are the main culture shocks you have experienced in Portugal? Can you tell me any interesting story you remember?	
The people you contact with in your daily life, more Chinese or more Portuguese?	
Chinese	H5
In your daily life, what are the main reasons you interact with non-Chinese?	
Talk with the waiters in store and restaurant. Say hello with my neighbors. And have dinner with my Portuguese colleagues, celebrate birthday party and teambuilding activities.	H5
What are the main responsibilities about your job?	
Project management.	
The biggest challenges in your job	
Language	H1
What are the main differences between Portuguese and Chinese working style?	
It is hard to have deep and personal communication with clients. The boundary between life and work is clear, I think it not good to develop business.	H8
Do you think it is suitable for oversea working, in terms of your personal characteristics? And what personalities do you think are not suitable in	

working in others countries? Why?	
I think it is suitable. Personally, I like the way that divide life and work in two part, and the simple and direct way of communication.	H2
How about the roles of your family members made in your oversea working experience? Positive or negative?	
There are no effect on my working.	

Interview I

Gender: Male Age: 30 Marital status: Single Province of China: Academic background: Bachelor	
When did come to Portugal?	
The end of 2010	
How well do you speak English or Portuguese?	
Fluent English	
Do you have any other expatriate experiences? When and where?	
Yes, I have business trip in Europe. It is helpful for me to know well about the foreign life. I know a story of my colleague, he was the first time to go aboard to Holland, he did not know anything about the foreign life and the English is not good. When he arrived at the airport in Holland, he faced a lot of problems and almost repatriated by the police.	I3
Why you choose to work in Portugal?	
It is not my choice, it is the dispatch of my company.	
Did you receive some special training before you come to Portugal? If so, what kind of training? Do you think it matches the needs to work in Portugal or do you have any suggestions?	
I have English training and general knowledge training before. After the training, I need to access the test which is organized by my company. This training helped me have a general knowledge about Portugal, and the knowledge facilitates me adapt the new environment at the beginning.	I3
How you feel about the living conditions in Portugal? Like housing conditions, food.	
The environment here is very good. The company provides house for me. I cook by myself, and I can also eat the western food.	I4 I6
The differences about cost of living compare with China?	
It is almost the same compare with the first class cities in China.	I8
About the entertainment, do you have more time or opportunities to relax? What kind of leisure activities do you have in Portugal and how do they differ from those you had in China?	
The life here is very single. The entertainment for me are mainly exercises, like football, basketball and running. There are more choices in China.	I8
How about the health care services in Portugal?	
I do not know.	
What are the main culture shocks you have experienced in Portugal? Can you	

tell me any interesting story you remember?	
They do not like use the red color when writing E-mail. It is the symbol of anger.	I8
The people you contact with in your daily life, more Chinese or more Portuguese?	
Both.	
In your daily life, what are the main reasons you interact with non-Chinese?	
The main reasons for me to contact with non-Chinese are working, have dinner and play football.	I5
What are the main responsibilities about your job?	
Technical support engineer.	
The biggest challenges in your job	
Language. At the beginning, I need to adjust the working style of them, for example they like to send E-mail other than talk face to face.	I1 I8
What are the main differences between Portuguese and Chinese working style?	
Do you think it is suitable for oversea working, in terms of your personal characteristics? And what personalities do you think are not suitable in working in others countries? Why?	
I study outside when I was young, the adjustment ability is strong for me. And I think the personalities can be develop to adjust the environment.	I4
How about the roles of your family members made in your oversea working experience? Positive or negative?	
I am single. And I have a sister in China, so my parents have no influence for my working. But I want to working in China now.	I6

Interview J

Gender: Male Age: 27 Marital status: Married Province of China: Anhui Academic background: Bachelor	
When did come to Portugal?	
The end of 2011	
How well do you speak English or Portuguese?	
Fluent English.	
Do you have any other expatriate experiences? When and where?	
No.	
Why you choose to work in Portugal?	
Did you receive some special training before you come to Portugal? If so, what kind of training? Do you think it matches the needs to work in Portugal or do you have any suggestions?	
Some basic knowledge about oversea working and the country.	J3
How you feel about the living conditions in Portugal? Like housing	

conditions, food.	
Very good. The company provides the house for me. I think the difference between Portuguese and Chinese food are not that much, compare with other Europe country.	J8
The differences about cost of living compare with China?	
The company provides consumer subsidies for the employees because the price in Portugal are higher than China.	J6
About the entertainment, do you have more time or opportunities to relax? What kind of leisure activities do you have in Portugal and how do they differ from those you had in China?	
Compare with China, there are fewer facilities and places to entertainment, and have fewer friends. But the leisure time are more than in China. I like exercising and traveling, so I do not feel boring here.	J8
How about the health care services in Portugal?	
What are the main culture shocks you have experienced in Portugal? Can you tell me any interesting story you remember?	
These things can be seen every day. There are many differences in communication, but we will reach a consensus in the end. I think the Portuguese are easy going, tend to be persuades, and not stubborn. Also, there are many similarities between Chinese and Portuguese, like the conception between superior and subordinate, they also consider the seniority and the position level.	J8
The people you contact with in your daily life, more Chinese or more Portuguese?	
There are more foreigners in working, more Chinese in personal life.	J5
In your daily life, what are the main reasons you interact with non-Chinese?	
Working, accompany with clients, team building, and take party.	J5
What are the main responsibilities about your job?	
Marketing management of Mobile phone.	
The biggest challenges in your job	
At the beginning, I need to adjust the new environment, at that time I have some difficulties. But I have senior staff to help me. The culture of my company is expansion, we usually make the goal of maximizing. But the Portuguese tend to be comfortable, choose a lower target. It is none of my business if or not I can reach the goal.	J5 J8 J7
What are the main differences between Portuguese and Chinese working style?	
The working efficiency here is lower, they do not have the value of time.	J8
Do you think it is suitable for oversea working, in terms of your personal characteristics? And what personalities do you think are not suitable in working in others countries? Why?	
I am open mind and tend to accept new things, and like traveling. And the ability of independent living. If you are a person who like stay in home, I	J2

think it is same both working in China and overseas.	
How about the roles of your family members made in your oversea working experience? Positive or negative?	
I am just married in May this year. We already adjust the situation that living in different place. Also, my company have allowance to the family members if they want to accompany with you.	J6