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## **Master Thesis**

Topic:

The impact of other family members' well-being on expatriate's success – A literature review.

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# 1. Introduction

With the increasing economic globalization, to maintain competitiveness or become successful in the market, companies expand globally and have to manage increasingly diverse employees, work culture, partners, and clients, which brings them new opportunities but also many challenges. Often companies require the home knowledge, management, processes, or office environment to be passed to the new employees to ensure that the work culture, governance, and ethos of the main organization are transferred smoothly to the new location. Thus international assignments (IA) and expatriate programs become popular solutions for highly effective tools for knowledge transfer, information sharing, the imposition of culture, routines, processes, etc. Black and Gregersen (1999) stated, that 80% of large and midsize firms send their workers abroad and about half of them plan to generally increase their international assignments. Thus globally competent employees and managers who have knowledge about the diversity and variety of foreign markets and cultures can interact with people from other parts of the world, and are able to effectively work and live outside of their home countries, are known to be a premium human resource for multinational companies (Adler and Bartholomew, 1992). However, often the global competence is not sufficient for a successful international assignment and a successful expatriate manager. For the international assignment to be successful, many aspects have to be considered and met and in some cases, the affair stays very individual which makes it hard to define the only best way to manage the expatriates abroad. One of the very important aspects is the expatriate family and their well-being. Assuming that there is an impact of the family on the success of the expatriate, we could ensure the success of international assignment with the management of the expatriate family, which has to go through a lot of stress, problems, and troubles, such as an adjustment in a new country, children having to change their school, changes in family routines, long periods of separation from their loved ones, change in financial status, cultural differences, etc. (Haslberger and Brewster, 2009; Patterson, 1988). This thesis will clarify if there is a direct impact of the family on the expatriate and what is the impact of the family's well-being on the expatriate's success.

## 1.1. Problem

Even though expatriates programs can work in the company's favour, challenges are occurring at every step of the process. Since 1990, taking into account employees' points of view, the attractiveness of expatriation has been becoming weaker and weaker, which causes the issue for many international companies, known as the shortage of suitable candidates interested in participating in an international assignment (Dowling, et. al, 1999; Torbiörn 1982). Moreover, the failure rate of international assignments, known also as premature returns from the assignment, is still significantly high: 25-40% within expatriation in developed countries and 70% in developing countries (Andreason, 2003). These numbers have a significant impact on costs that the company has to undertake. Valner and Palmer (2002), as well as Yeaton and Hall (2008), estimated the costs of a single failed assignment to be 250 000\$ - 1 million \$ depending on the organization. Additionally, almost 1/3 of expatriates' work is executed below superiors' expectations (Black and Gregersen, 1999).

Despite the high rate of assignment failure and the focus on cost reduction, companies continuously increase their number of expatriate programs (Black and Gregersen, 1999). Thus it is crucial to understand why international assignments fail, as 10 – 45% of all expatriates leave the host country before the planned return date based on different reasons (Laabs, 1998), such as lack of cross-cultural training, cultural shock, spouse dissatisfaction, family problems, and inability to adjust (Kupka and Cathro, 2007; Chiotis, 2009; Gupta and Gupta, 2012; Ko, 2014). Professional identity issues, as well as personal identity issues, have a role in the adjustment to the new environment. And the adjustment is known to be one of the most important factors in the ability to perform expected tasks (Khan, Khan, and Rahman, 2011). A successful adjustment of the family members and the expatriates in the foreign environment in terms of values, language, and religion can only be done with the cross-cultural adjustment (Black, 1990). Black (1990) suggests that cross-cultural adjustment in a different environment has to be done on three levels: general adjustment (being comfortable with different living conditions), interaction adjustment (comfortable engagement with the locals), and work adjustment (adapting to the work culture in the host country). This proves the point, that headquarters' job, and responsibility, is not only to make sure to choose the right manager based on their work/management capabilities but also to consider many different, personal and family factors before and

during their mobility. This also brings up the question, of how important the family well-being, spouses adjustment, and personal family-related matters are in the adjustment and performance of the expatriate and if the impact between those factors exists.

## 1.2. Relevance

The failure of an expatriate assignment is known as earlier as a planned return to the normal place of residence or home country, the resignation of the manager, or a low-performance level of the work given to the manager by headquarters management (Chiotis-Leskowich, 2009; Shi & Wang, 2014). Long-term expatriate assignments of one to four years, usually involve relocating the whole family to a host country (Lee, 2007; Wilkinson, 2010), which causes significant challenges for the adjustment of the family. Around 80% of all expatriates relocate with a partner or a spouse (Brookfield Global Relocation Services, 2015). Spousal dissatisfaction and family problems are important factors in the well-being, stress level, happiness of individuals, and their ability to perform different tasks. Additionally, family adjustment may have an important role in the performance of an expatriate and is important to MNC, both from a non-financial and a financial perspective (Lee, 2007).

Generally, not only in the case of expatriates, family influence on work performance is significant and problems and stress at home can cause low work performance (Byron, 2005).

Another point is that known researchers are mostly focused on the expatriate itself and not on the spouses and families (Chen and Shaffer, 2018). As well as the companies are mainly focused on their managers and not the factors that could or could not influence the performance of their manager, but are not directly related to the work s/he does. The question of this thesis is to review already existing theories and studies and describe the impact of the family and spouses on the expatriate performance, adjustment, and furthermore success.

## 1.3. Methodology

The study for this thesis was conducted as a form of a literature review focusing on expatriates and their families with an emphasis on the relationship between different family members' well-being and expatriate success. In order to better understand the family's impact and the possible positive relation of the family's well-being with the

international assignment manager's success, the literature on the topic was collected and analysed in different stages and took into account different views.

The articles were found with the use of known databases and were accessible free of cost. The finding process was done with the use of keywords and took one and a half a month. Later, the elimination process was conducted, which was done in multiple stages presented in the flow chart (Figure 2): the elimination based on accessibility, elimination based on the topic and abstract, elimination based on the relation to this thesis question, elimination based on other factors. Additionally, the found pool of articles' resources was examined and taken into consideration with the same elimination process as the one mentioned for the publications found via keywords database search. The final pool consists of 29 articles that were thoroughly examined to use in this thesis.

The articles were later categorized based on the different topics, such as family support influencing the expatriates, the influence of the family on the expatriates' well-being, and the impact of the family on the adjustment, performance, and success of the international assignment. Later the general impact of the family on expatriates was analysed and connected to the known spill- and cross-over theories, afterwards there was sufficient input to answer the research question which is the impact of the family members' well-being on the expatriates' success.

## 2. Theoretical background and research question

Multinational companies decide to undertake international assignments in order to share the knowledge and experience of the headquarters with the new subsidiary abroad and ensure the financial success of the subsidiary as well as the whole multinational company (Rosenzweig, 1994). The international assignment's purpose is to be successful and add value to the company and the employee. For the success of the international assignment, the expatriate has to execute their job at the highest level possible. It is consistent with the theories mentioned below that the manager as an individual and the success of their work is influenced by many complex factors that in some cases could be managed by the company or the manager itself. Some of those factors are also family-related. Lee (2007) states, that the support of the family is one of the most important factors contributing to the success of the international

assignment. This helps to raise the research question of this thesis and will also contribute to the further outlook of this topic. As some of the factors can be controlled or managed by multinational companies, there should be more knowledge on the factors themselves, their influence, and their possible control. Awareness of the problem and the search for optimization of the process of the international assignments in order to be the most profitable not only for the company but also for the expatriates and their families is the general topic of this thesis and should be a crucial procedure done by the companies, during a preparation phase. Consistently with the adjustment and cultural theories as well as cross- and spill-over theories, in order for the international assignment to be successfully implemented, the companies should not only be concerned with their employees-expatriates but also with their families and loved ones. In this case arose one particular idea of the family members' well-being and its influence on the expatriate taking into account not only the work strictly related to the international assignment, the revenues important for the companies and the retention but also the personal growth and the well-being of the employee. The questions that needed to be asked were the existence of the family influence on the expatriates and the international assignments, the influence factors had to be identified, the relationship between them and adjustment, performance, and the international assignment had to be created. There are many theories already presented in the literature that are related to these factors and influences. They have to be taken into consideration when answering the research question which is the impact of the family members' well-being on the expatriate's success. Additionally, the literature review could potentially answer other important questions, which are of interest in this topic. Those could be the different levels of family influence on the international assignment based on the cultural differences of the host and home countries; different levels and different family factors being an influencer of the expatriate success also based on the cultural distance; the differences in the influence of the family or the need for the influence from the family based on the age of the expatriates; gender differences within expatriates and the influence of their families on the success of the international assignments; the change in the influence as well as the need for family support based on the number of international assignments done or overall time spend abroad (experience factor); the role of the family well-being and their support in the adjustment process of the expatriates and expatriates families; the influence of the family on the well-being of expatriates and the role of the well-being of



expatriates in the success of the international assignment. There are also additional findings expected to be found based on the publications' pool.

One of the most basic and very important in the lives of the expatriates and their families is the theory of culture shock and the adaptation to the foreign countries, cultures, and places (Oberg, 1960; Taft, 1977). Looking at the bigger picture of the theory of shock, there is an important process occurring in the lives of all people experiencing the changes and problems related to the move to the new culture. The U-Curve of cross-cultural adjustment (Lysgaard, 1955) is a process of adjusting to a new culture and in the case of expatriates, also possibly a new job. The U-curve (Figure 1) represents the phases of the process of adaptation until the individual feels fully adjusted to the new place. The companies that handle international assignments, as well as individuals taking part in them, do experience problems of culture shock arising after 2-4 months of their stay and it is very important to notice and take actions that will prevent the inadaptation and possibly failure of the assignment. Additionally, this theory also relates to the family of the expatriates, which may have an effect on the employee and thus also the international assignment. What is important to notice is the moment of the honeymoon phase, when the individuals seem to live at a high point and excitement for a short period of time, which could potentially dull the vigilance of the headquarters managers and the expatriates. However, with time, the high becomes low with stress and problems of adjustment and without the correct support and mindset, it could create catastrophic outcomes. Finally, with support and resilience, individuals experience the adjustment and can well function in a foreign environment (Lee, 2006). The phase of culture shock is the most important part of the U-Curve, as it is the moment when all can go wrong and it is also the moment that can decide of the success of the international assignment. Thus, it is important for the companies and the expatriates to identify all possible factors that can help with overcoming the culture shock, perfect them and also recognize the factors that will determine the failure of the expatriate and, if possible, eliminate them or at least find solutions to ease their effect. At this moment the family can appear to be a success factor or an obstacle to the international assignment and this period can also decide of the status of the well-being of the family and expatriates.

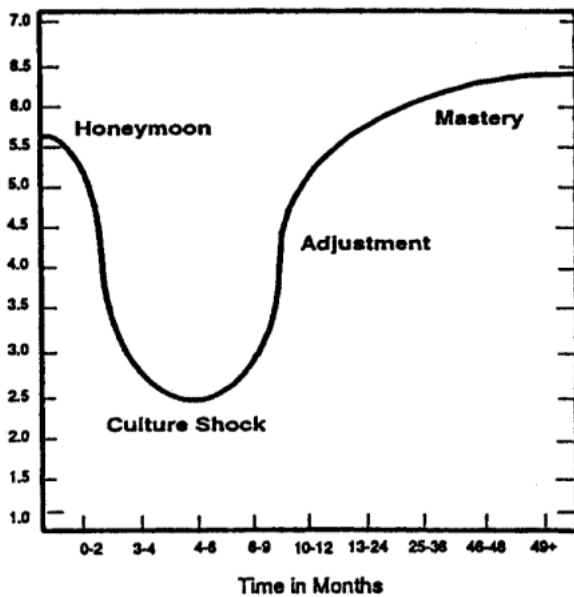


Figure 1. The U-Curve of cross-cultural adjustment <sup>1</sup>

Another important theory related to the adjustment and expatriate programs is the theory of cross-cultural adjustment, which is an internal, emotional, and psychological state and should be defined based on the viewpoint of the individual experiencing the foreign culture (Black, 1990). Black (1990) suggests that cross-cultural adjustment has to be done on three levels: general adjustment (being comfortable with different living conditions), interaction adjustment (comfortable engagement with the locals), and work adjustment (adapting to the work culture in the host country). This provides the theory to be considered by the headquarters and the expatriates that shows the complexity of the process of entering a new market with an expatriate program. The adjustment is not solely related to the workplace but has many different factors influencing it. The responsibility of the company and the expatriate is to identify them and make sure they will all contribute to the international assignment success, or at least will not be a prevention factor from the expatriate success. This also presents the problem of not choosing the right manager for the right position. Lee (2006) emphasizes in the article importance of not only choosing the right expatriate manager based on their work/management capabilities but also considering many different, personal, and family factors before and during their mobility, to ensure the success of the assignment. The Black's general adjustment factor (1990) presents also the aspect of the family

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<sup>1</sup> Lysgaard, 1955

state playing a role in the overall adjustment of the expatriate which later is an important condition in the success of the expatriate.

The spill-over and cross-over theories play also an important role in the international assignment and the relationship between family and the success of the expatriates, as they show the impact of different domains and spheres on those potentially unrelated to the given perspective (Bolger et. al, 1989). The experiences, stresses, and emotions related to one domain may result in experiencing them as well in other domains. In the context of this study, problems at home will bring possibly worse focus and performance at work. Additionally, the experiences can also be transferred from one person to another. An unhappy person will influence the mood of another person which results in lowering the general happiness level (Bolger et. al, 1989). In the case of international assignments that also works in the adjustment. Not a well-adjusted spouse can cross-over her/his experience to the husband/wife and it also results in lowering the possibility of assignment success. This is a theory that may explain the reason why the family is such an important factor in the expatriate's success and shows the international companies the significance of the family. According to these theories, the international companies should put more focus on the family of the expatriate and make sure that they will create a safe environment where the employee can evolve and create value for the company.

## 2.1. Definitions

One of the very important pieces of knowledge in this thesis would be at first to determine the vocabulary and terms and their exact meaning used later for a literature review. As it is common to read different, sometimes contradictory findings presented by various scientists with other points of view, perceptions, or findings based on different factors, it is crucial to set up the definitions which will be used throughout this thesis. It is also important to notice, that some of the definition are very similar to each other, however, the main point or specific factor vary, which may change the meaning of the term.

**Expatriate**, sometimes shortened to “expat” is defined in Oxford English Dictionary (2022) as a person living in a foreign country, but in the context of this study and as a term for international management, multinational companies management, and international business, the expatriate is better known as a qualified employee,

manager, who is sent by the company, from his home base to a different country in order to run a branch or a department of this company abroad (McNulty and Brewster, 2017). Expatriate in international business are further defined as individual who moves to another country, has a place of residence, and has a specific goal and tasks to work in the new environment (Andresen et. al, 2014). Expatriates could also be employees who perform their job abroad, for the company in the host country. The time that s/he spends abroad is different, based on the company, the assignment, and the preferences of management strategies. The task and specific work are also undefined until the international assignment is planned but generally expatriates should support the local workforce in achieving the company's goals.

In the literature focusing on work-family, **an expatriate's family** is defined as two life partners (in any combination: married, de-facto, live-in, or long-term partners of the opposite or same-sex), with or without children, with family members that live in different locations; and divorced, legally separated or single adults with children, with family members that live in different locations (McNulty, 2014). Or the expatriates' immediate relatives who are in the host country with the managers or stayed in the home country.

**The success of international assignments** was very well defined in the study made by DeNisi and Sonesh (2016), where they focus on many dimensions of success and determined role factors in the IA success. Their expanded model presents, that success is an integrated idea of different factors, such as satisfying task performance, relationship building (the relationship between the expatriate and local employees, the ability to identification of local talent and its development), contextual performance (behaviour, which is not directly related to the technical activities needed to perform a task by the individual abroad, but instead supports the social and psychological environment in which the activities must be executed) and retention (perusing further job opportunities in the home country after the mobility with the same company). They also argue, that adjustment of the expatriate should be viewed as a precondition to success, which would mean is also an important part of the definition, but the successful adjustment does not have to precisely mean a successful assignment. (DeNisi and Sonesh, 2016).

**The international assignment failure** includes a broad range of terms such as premature return of the expatriates, low performance, adjustment problems,

underperformance, etc. (Harzing and Christensen, 2004). Additionally, we can define assignment failure as the exact opposite of **assignment success**, which would add to the definition also failed relationship building, failed contextual performance, failed absorptive capacity, low level of knowledge acquiring, and failed retention (DeNisi and Sonesh, 2016).

Personal adjustment was described by Shaffer and Harrison (2001) as identity change where social and personal roles are redefined when routines and attachments established in home countries are redetermined. They defined a bond between personality and culture changes in the case of **expatriate adjustment**. Adjustment of an expatriate is fulfilled when they manage tasks and live in the new environment (their perception and the perception of the hosts), possess sufficient knowledge about the host country's environment, and when they have no negative emotions overall (Haslberger and Brewster, 2009). Adjustment is the process of becoming an individual, that can manage the upcoming problems and stresses, feel generally positive emotions related to a change of location, and does live well in the new environment. The known problem in the adjustment of expatriates is the many factors approach, they have to adjust to a new job and also come clear with the move to a different country, usually, a partner becoming jobless, children having to change their school, changing family routines, long periods of separation from their loved ones, occupying a new residence, a change in financial status, cultural differences, etc. (Patterson, 1988; Haslberger and Brewster, 2009; Bahn, 2015).

For the general definition of **family adjustment**, mostly, the same meaning can be used, as in the case of expatriate adjustment. However, in the case of defining the challenges that they have to overcome in order to adjust fully, some differences and additional aspects can be seen. Some studies say, the challenges are not only different from those that expatriates have to deal with, but also greater (Punnett, 1997). Thus, in order for the family to adjust, there are more work, preparation, and resources needed, both on the side of the family, the expatriate itself, and the company (if they do want to have a highly functioning employee).

The know criteria of **expatriate success** are listed by Caligiuri (1997) and they are:

1. completion of the foreign assignment,
2. cross-cultural adjustment,

### 3. performance on the foreign assignment

The question arises, what is the difference between expatriate success and assignment success. One can say there is not much difference, but in a more detailed view, the expatriate success is more related to this individual as a manager, as a person, and how he manages and leads to the success or failure of the specific (international) assignments. The expatriate failure would be the exact opposite of the expatriates' success definition.

**The culture shock** was the first time defined by an anthropologist Kalervo Oberg (1960), he connected the culture shock with a psychological and occupational illness and distress of people who have been suddenly transplanted out of their home country, as a result of losing all the known signals and signs of social interaction. He pointed out, that some individuals make a good and fast recovery with a rapid adjustment to the new environment; others can develop a long-term chronic and debilitating condition. After 1960 the definition evolved but the core stayed as proven by Oberg (1960). Taft (1977) identified different aspects of culture shock and 5 of them are used in this thesis to define culture shock.

1. Stress caused by the effort required to make necessary adaptations on the psychological level
2. A feeling of loss and deprivation in relation to status, friends, profession, and possessions.
3. Feeling the rejection coming from members of the new culture
4. Confusion in the meaning of roles, role expectations, feelings, values, and self-identity
5. Anxiety, surprise, and sometimes even disgust after noticing the cultural differences

**Well-being** can be perceived as a simple word with a simple description, as a status or a condition that makes individuals feel positive emotions, feel fulfilment, be happy with their life situation, family and friends, work and hobbies, and be successful in different parts of their life. However, the academic definition of "well-being" is far more complex. Important to notice would be the difference between description and definition. Dodge, et. al (2012) emphasize in their work how different are the approaches to define the world and they also find the most simple and universal way

to explain its meaning and define it, with the use of previous studies that used description of this status. Their definition of well-being takes into account three areas: the set point of well-being, the inevitability of balance and the state between resources that an individual owns, and the challenges that s/he has to take. Both resources and challenges are psychological, social, and physical and in order to achieve a well-being state, the individual should be at the midpoint between those two factors (Dodge, et. al 2012). Taking this definition into the perspective of this study, the family of the expatriate should have enough resources to be able to overcome the challenges that await them: a move to a new country, adjustment to a new job, finding a place in a new situation, being positive towards the new life, managing family problems, and overcoming culture shock. And also have enough challenges, to not come to a state of stagnation. The resources that the family can have varied from person to person, but some general factors could be the same for all and they could be learned or achieved with the help of the company's support team. The same case would be with the challenges, some of them would be identical for the whole family, and some would be more individual. Additionally, the study will also briefly focus on the well-being of the expatriates, as it is the factor positively influencing the performance of the expatriate and the successful fulfilment of the assignment (Wang, 2001).

**Spill-over theory** shows that the experiences associated with one domain of one individual's life results in the same experiences in another domain, for example, the stress in one domain, which could be home, will result in stress in another domain – work (if an employee had an argument with his partner in the morning, afterward, for that reason, he has a bad day at work) (Bolger et. al, 1989).

**Cross-over theory** focuses on the experiences of an individual resulting in the same experiences in another individual, for example, a stressed employee results in a stressed spouse (a stressed employee comes back home and starts an argument, which results in the partner experiencing stress) (Bolger et. al, 1989).

## 2.2. Derivation

This thesis focuses on expatriates and their families with an emphasis on different family members' well-being's influence on the expatriate's success. The study was done in order to better understand the family's impact and the possible positive relation of the family's well-being to the international assignment manager's success. As it is

already highlighted in the introduction, problem, and relevance above, the family have an impact on individuals and it is also a topic of various studies in the case of international assignments, as those are stages of employees' life where occurs high stress, uncertainty and not yet known problems and solutions, which causes even more stress and the expatriates may need more support from their loved ones as in any other cases. The aim of all the international assignments is to be successful and add value to the company and the employee. In order for the international assignment to be successful, the managers have to do their job according to the headquarters' expectations. The manager is influenced by many complex factors and some of them are the loved ones, their relationships, their adjustment, their well-being, and their willingness to support the manager on and off work. Following the work of Lee (2007), the support of the family is one of the most important factors influencing the successful adjustment to the international assignment. This means, that in order for the international assignment to be successfully implemented, the companies should not only be concerned with the employees-expatriates but also with their families and loved ones. Additionally, the point mentioned by Chen and Shaffer (2018) is, that the known researches focus mostly on the expatriate itself and not on the family members. This raises many questions and many ideas for further studies on expatriates and their families and how to optimize the process and work of the international assignments in order to be the most profitable not only for the company but also for the expatriates and their families. One particularly interesting question was focusing on the family members' well-being and the positiveness of the relationship between their well-being and the success of the expatriate on the level of international assignments, which not only includes the work being done but also the positive aspect of international assignment on personal growth, the impact of the assignment on the company's revenues, the retention of the employee and the well-being of the person doing the assignment, as the well-being contributes to the improvement of various measures of assignment performance (Cropanzano and Wright, 2001). Thus this became a research question. However, there are studies already conducted on this topic, with different research bases, in different countries, with highlights on different measures, with a focus on adjustment, success, and well-being. Regardless, none of the known literature focused particularly on the impact of family well-being in general on expatriate success. There is either the impact of family on the success and other factors contributing to it, excluding the family well-being factor, or the impact of family well-



being on the factors that may contribute to success, such as adjustment or performance. Consequently, in order to make a full valuable study, the literature review was conducted on the mentioned topic of family well-being and its impact on the success of the expatriate, and the results of it are presented below.

### 3. Methodology

I undertook a wide quest in different online databases to ensure the findings of related articles published in various journals. The search was limited to studies written in the English language, as it is the language used in the top journals in the field of international management, multinational companies, expatriate programs, and international assignments and it is also the language used in this thesis. The study was not limited by a specific location, companies, numbers of respondents, self-initiation of the employees, family situation, or the current status of the international assignment, as well as the publication date of the articles. However, the official search for the articles (after a pre-search was done in order to get the idea for the thesis, search for a gap in the literature and specify the research question) was limited by time and was conducted in the time period 10.03.2022 – 30.04.2022. One more limit was also the accessibility of the researches, it had to be open access, or access provided either by TU Liberec or TU Dresden. Additionally to the search in databased, the articles were searched through the references of the already found pool. The cross-reference process was also included to broaden the article pool by investigating the references of other publications already found.

The research pool examination was concluded in two main steps. The first one focused on the family impact in general on the expatriates and their well-being, work, performance, and success. However, this excludes the factor of the family being in a well-being state and does not give an answer to a research question, but shows the relationship between the family members and the expatriates and gives sufficient information to conduct the second step of the assessment. The second part consists of the examination of the articles including the factor of the well-being of the family members and is conducted with the use of the theories of spill-over and cross-over effects.

### 3.1. Keyword definition

In the first stage of the lookout process to search for articles related to this thesis, keywords had to be defined. They had to be related to international assignment and the family impacting it, the expatriates, their success, and the success factors, thus with the use of these keywords, the databases were searched: “expatriates families”, “expatriate performance”, “expatriate success”, “expatriate adjustment”, “expatriate well-being”, “family’s well-being”, “family’s adjustment”, “family’s impact on the expatriate”, “spouses’ well-being”, “spouses’ adjustment”, “spouses’ impact on the expatriate”, “factors of expatriate success”, “international assignments”, “expatriate programs”, “success factors of an international assignment”, “expatriate and family”, “expatriates’ family”, “expatriate and partner”, “expatriate’s spouse”, “international assignment and family”, “expatriate’s children”, “dual-career expatriate”. In all the cases, “expatriate” was replaced with the words: global assignee, short-term/long-term assignee, and international business traveler.

### 3.2. Quest for empirical studies via databanks

To search for the articles there was a need to use databases such as Google Scholar, EBSCO, Scopus, Unpaywall, SLUB Katalog, Emerald, Web of Science, ProQuest, Science Direct, and Springer Link for relevant publications. The databases were searched with the use of the keywords specified above and this search returned an enormous number of articles. In the next step, the titles were examined and those which did not appear to have any connection to my research question were excluded. The first elimination factor at this stage was the availability of the articles as an open-access or as provided by the TU Dresden or TU Liberec resource, which allowed me to read the studies. Afterward came the revision of titles and abstracts which should be generally connected to the topic of international assignment or expatriates. Then to finalize the search for possibly qualified works, the conditions for the selection of relevant articles were set as: the research should be focused on the international assignment or the expatriate and have at least a family factor included in it or should be focused on the family of expatriates and mention a factor of international assignment or expatriate. After this process, 31 articles were identified.

### 3.3. Quest for empirical studies via literature of the found articles

The references of articles found in the databanks search were also examined to ensure that no other important studies were overlooked in the quest. Here the challenge occurred when the articles weren't published with an open access possibility, thus many publications could not be included in this thesis. They were in one way examined by the titles and abstracts, same as in the case of database-found articles, and then, the ones chosen were investigated by the relevance to the research question and the conditions mentioned above. In another way, they were searched for in the text of database-found studies with conditions of relevance to the topic of this thesis. Based on this quest, another 20 articles were found. Together with the database quest, the found studies at this point consisted of 51 qualitative and quantitative studies articles and one literature review.

### 3.4. The elimination factors

The elimination factors mentioned already were the accessibility and the focus on either the international assignment/expatriate or the expatriate's family. However, this did not yet give a sufficient sample, which focused on my research question. The other factors were persisted with the help of identification of the factors contributing to the family well-being state and the factors contributing to the success of the expatriate and international assignment, which were associated with the family. Thus the other, more detailed conditions that the articles had to include were specified as the influence of the family on the expatriate, the influence of the family on the international assignment, the influence of the family on the expatriate's success and/or adjustment, the support of the family for the expatriate and the family impact on the expatriate well-being.

### 3.5. The elimination process

The elimination process consisted of a few steps. First resulted in excluding the articles to which I had no access. The second step focused on the titles and abstracts of the publications and removed those articles from my pool, that did not put a focus on the international assignment, the expatriate, or the expatriate family. Afterward this conditions were applied: the family factor connected to the international assignment, the expatriate or the international assignment or expatriate factor relationship in the research focused on expatriates. Then came the moment for identification of the other factors mentioned above (the influence of the family on the expatriate, the influence of

the family on the international assignment, the influence of the family on the expatriate's success and/or adjustment, the support of the family for the expatriate and the family impact on the expatriate well-being) and if the articles did not include at least one of them, they were considered irrelevant. This left the final pool of 29 articles that were reviewed and presented in this thesis. The whole process is presented with the use of a flow chart below (Figure 2).

Figure 2. Flow chart of the methodology.



## 4. Results

The search process resulted in 29 published articles that then were examined for the need of answering the research question. This part presents the descriptive statistics of the articles in the pool. Based on the complexity of the studies, as well as on the different approaches and factors considered in the publications, detailed descriptive statistics on the samples of the researches are limited.

### 4.1. Descriptive statistics of the found article pool

The quest for the articles took place between 10.03.2022 and 30.04.2022 and resulted in 29 articles, which consist of both qualitative and quantitative studies on the topic of expatriates, expatriates' families, and international assignments. As already mentioned in the methodology, the articles had to include specified topics or had to refer to at least some of the features needed for the examination of the given research question. The articles in the pool were including either the topics of the expatriates, their spouses, their families, the success factors of an international assignment, the troubles of international assignees, or all the topics mentioned above. The publications focused on the roles of the family members and the expatriates during all the phases of international assignment as well as the factors of role adjustment, the relationships between family and expatriates and work domain, the work-family conflicts the conflicts avoidance, and the stress management. The matters mentioned in the articles were also: the perception, motivation, and decisions regarding the international career and the international assignments, the characteristics of expatriates and their families, the satisfaction factors, the resources needed for the successful expatriation as well as social, emotional and organizational support that the expatriates and their families need and are provided with. Additionally, some articles were focused on the success factors of international assignments as well as the factors influencing the expatriates' failure, the detailed view on the adjustment of the expatriate, the family and its impact on the work, and the reasons to prematurely terminate the international assignment. Furthermore, some of the articles in the pool focused also on the cultural challenges that the expatriates and their families had to face and the cultural shock they experience. The oldest reviewed articles were published in 1998 (Shaffer, et. al, 1998; Tung, 1998) and the newest in 2020 (Dang and Rammal, 2020). The pool consists of 29 articles with qualitative and quantitative approaches, the data collection was done

either with interviews, surveys (online, via post, via email, via telephone), or the personal observation of the sample. Additionally, one article in the pool is a research review on the topic of expatriates solely from Japan. In all of the articles, almost 5000 expatriates, expatriates' spouses, expatriates' family members, or expatriates' supervisors gave input to the creation of those studies, thus in order to conduct this literature review, those 5000 individuals and 75 other publications, taken into account in the review on Japanese expatriates, were examined.

#### 4.2. Descriptive statistics about the samples

As mentioned already above, the samples vary a lot throughout the articles, in some, the sample included only expatriates, in some expatriates and their partners, only partners, just some family members or dyads of expatriates and supervisors, thus it is complicated to present summary statistics of the given samples. Additionally, not in all the articles there are specifications of such simple information as the gender, age, the international experience, country of origin, or the host country of the participants. That information would be very important later in the conclusion-creating process, however, can be used only in a few cases.

Almost 5000 individuals were interviewed, participated in a survey, or were observed by the authors. The pool includes the samples from 16 families whose family members were observed and interviewed, 64 not specified family members of families who came back prematurely from the international assignments, 876 couples in which one was an expatriate, 213 expatriate-supervisor dyads, 66 spouses, and 2835 expatriates. In the whole pool, there were 3900 studied expatriates. Country of origin wasn't mentioned in all of the articles in the pools and sometimes it was specified to only a few of the respondents, however, those that were mentioned more than once were: Germany, Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Pakistan, Singapore, Switzerland, and Finland. Mentioned at least twice or more in the home country were: Netherland, Australia, Canada, the UK, and the USA. Also, the big challenge in the descriptive statistics was that some of the articles specified the countries in detail, some just focused on briefly giving the name of the continent, specified the nationality of the individual, or gave a home country of the expatriate description as "other country", "African country", "Asian country", "EU country", which doesn't give much information about the culture of the home country of the expatriates and about the cultural differences between the "Asian

country” when the expatriates' host country is Malaysia. This problem was actually a huge disappointment for the pool, as it will make it impossible to draw some culturally related conclusions further in this study, however, this would be mentioned again in the further outlook. The same issue happened with the specifications of the host country of the expatriates. Some articles focused on only one country, which gave a clear picture of the host country, however, some of them were broader, and yet again, a few of them included descriptions as “different countries”, “European countries”, “Africa”, “Asia”, “America”, “Western Europe”, “expatriates in 13 countries”, or weren't specified at all. Once more those mentioned mostly were: the USA, UK, EU, Australia, Singapore, China, UAE, India, Canada, Malaysia, and Saudi Arabia. The gender specification of the expatriates wasn't also mentioned in all the articles, however, the below presented numbers are all those given by the authors. In total, there were 1951 countable male expatriates and 529 female expatriates. It is very common in the international assignments, that the international managers are mostly men and the number above is consistent with the general trend in the world of international businesses. The number of females here could also be somehow biased and the results could be inflated, as some of the studies in the pool focused solely on the female expatriates, as their topic was also connected to the gender inequality among international managers, which could give as even too high percentage of females in the international assignments which doesn't correspond to the reality. The trend, however, stays the same, there are more male expatriates than female expatriates who decided to participate in international assignments all over the globe. In terms of the time spent abroad by the expatriates, it was between less than 1 year and more than 15 years on average, yet some of the articles meant with this number duration of a current assignment and others the overall experience abroad during different international assignments. However, mostly mentioned time spent on the international assignment was from 1 year up to 5 years and the expatriates have done 1-5 international assignments of different duration times in different countries. The average age in the samples was between 25 and 48 years old, however, mostly mentioned was the age group between 37 – 47 years old.

### 4.3. Descriptive statistics about chosen methodologies

The articles in the pool had different methodologies. There are both qualitative and quantitative studies, the methods to get the samples in different publications were

interviews, surveys, one observation mix with interviews, and one literature review. Some of the researches focused more on the experiences of the expatriates or their family members, and some more on the factors or relationships taking a part in the international assignments. 12 studies took a quantitative approach and in all of them, surveys were used as a way of obtaining data. The surveys were conducted via internet, email, survey hosting websites, post, or telephone. There are 17 qualitative studies included in the pool which one of them is a research review on the topic of expatriates from Japan and the rest of the samples data was obtained via interviews, semi-structured interviews, in-depth interviews, one focus group interviews, surveys done with the use of emails, survey hosting websites, telephone and post and one group sample observation done along with the interview. In 14 studies the authors obtained the data with the use of surveys, there was one observation study connected with the interviews of the sample, one literature review, 12 publications used interviews, and lastly one used a combination of an interview, survey, and following focus group interview. Most of the methodologies were focused on collecting data from the expatriates or their spouses, however, some of them interviewed or surveyed other family members or in one case, supervisors of the expatriates. The methodologies were used to test different hypotheses and research questions, such as the different factors in relationships of family members and the expatriates, the roles of expatriates, their families, and the organizations in the different phases of an international assignment, the conflicts and stress management and the roles of the family, the different characteristics of expatriates and their families, the factors contributing to the expatriate satisfaction, the social and organizational resources of a successful international assignment and its success factors. Many articles focused on the studies of the adjustment, factors of adjustment, and adjustment as a factor in a successful expatriate as well as cultural challenges.

## 5. Literature review

In the further part is presented the literature review on the topic of the impact of other family members' well-being on expatriate's success, which was done in the time period 10.03.2022 – 30.04.2022 with the use of databases and methodology described above.



Some of the papers will be described more in detail, even though all of them were considered relevant to the topic and included in the comparison and process of drawing the conclusion of this study.

As mentioned more in detail in the methodology part, the question of the study was divided into 2 general impacts. First, is the impact of the family in general on the expatriate's well-being, adjustment, and success, and the second part particularly shows the impact that the well-being of the family may have on the positive relationship with the general success of the expatriate.

### 5.1. Impact of the family on expatriate well-being, adjustment, and success

This part presents the literature review of this study with the exclusion of the family well-being factor and emphasizes the potential impact of the family in general on the expatriate. The shown articles are presented in no specific order.

#### 5.1.1. Family's support for expatriates

The general family support is the factor studied by many researchers taking into account different angles, such as what is the family support, what are the factors of family's support, the importance of family's support, what is the influence of the family's support on the expatriate, is the family's support important for expatriates in terms of the success of the international assignment. This part of the literature review presents different articles that cover the topics of family's support for expatriates in the view of international assignments and presents the results of what had been studied and what conclusions are already presented. This will be a contribution to a later answer to the research question of the impact of other family members' well-being on expatriates' success.

**“The roles of expatriates’ spouses among dual career couples.”** (Mäkelä, et. al. 2011)

The study of Mäkelä, Känvälä, and Suutari (2011) was conducted in order to define the perception of the role of other family members in dual-career couples during an international assignment. The study was done with the use of interviews of 39 Finish expatriates (16 female, 23 male) that had working spouses and had at least one year of a long international assignment. In terms of this thesis and this subtopic of the

importance of the general family support for expatriates, they presented few significant findings. The importance of spousal support and flexibility increased during international assignments. This was caused by the long working hours of the expatriate, and the fact that all family members were coping with adjusting to the new country and culture. They stated, that the spousal support is more important on the international level, then in the domestic setting. The interviewed international assignees valued and needed the support they had received from their significant others in all the phases of their assignments.

The authors also mentioned two types of support that spouses give to the expatriate: practical level and emotional level support. In terms of emotional level support, interviewed expatriated pointed out, that their spouses' support had been of huge importance at every step of the assignment. The spouses had to also take over the significant role of being a companion and a friend in the new environment. The spouses were not only important for the expatriate and the assignment at home and in terms of the after-work life, but also they had a significant role in the work-life. The expatriates reported that it was essential for them to discuss with their spouses certain aspects of their everyday problems and issues at the workplace as well as generally their career plans, concerns and ideas.

The practical-level support focuses on household maintenance (including associated bureaucracy part) and children support (looking for schools for the children, and sports activities).

**“Coping with work-family conflicts in the global career context.”** (Mäkelä and Suutari, 2011)

In the other study by Mäkelä and Suutari (2011), which focused on understanding the work-life conflicts occurring in the global assignments and some coping mechanisms associated with overcoming the problems, the authors interviewed 20 Finish managers who had a global career (3 or more international assignments during their whole life). 15 males and 5 females had their assignments in 13 different countries, 25% of them stated they already participated in 3 international assignments, 30% in 4, and 45% in 5 international assignments during their career.

First of all, they found the work-life balance to be very challenging for international managers. But one very important resource to cope with work-life stress was partner's support. Also in this study, the partner was taking a best friend role. Family stability

and psychological support from the family were perceived to be important, the expatriates stated, that it was very helpful for them to have something stable in all the changes that had occurred during the international assignments. Some of the expatriates also stated that this kind of life would be hard if they didn't have a family supporting them in the background.

**“Career decisions of married Indian IT female expatriates.”** (Shah, et. al, 2019)

Shah, Agrawal, and Moeller (2019) conducted a study on the topic of female expatriates from India, working in the IT sector. In their study, they focus mostly on the perception of female expatriates on their career and expatriation but they also take into account their family situation and the impact of the family on them participating in the international assignment. The study was conducted in the form of interviews with 24 married Indian international assignees who made short or long-term assignments. 16 of them worked for Indian companies and 16 for non-Indian multinational companies. This study does take into consideration the situation of the dual-career couple and the importance of making the decision of traveling together or not. As this thesis focuses more on the expatriates' situation in the host country and new environment, it is important to also notice the stage of pre-mobility, where the manager and the families had to make a decision of accepting the assignment and finding the best way to execute it. In the study of Shah and colleagues (2019) the importance of the family and in some cases specifically husband is highlighted and explained for the decision-making phase. The interviews suggested multiple factors playing a role in deciding to leave the home country and choosing the expatriate position. The factors were: support from the husband, the decision of travelling together (case of the family) or living apart for the duration of the assignment, support from other family members and their networks in the host and home country, and the monetary benefits. In this case, three out of four points are related to family support for the expatriate. Additionally, the authors stated, that partner support is also an important factor in establishing the quality of the work-life balance of the international assignee.

**“Cross-cultural professional experiences of female expatriates Finding success through agility, resilience, and essential relationships.”** (France, et. al, 2019)

Another study focused on female expatriates from the USA, Australia, and Canada who worked in China and Taiwan on international assignments. The study focused on the relationships, characteristics, and resources that contribute to the expatriates'

success. The study was conducted with 10 interviews, 102 survey responses, and 3 focus groups and the findings have a very interesting impact on the conclusion of this thesis. France, Booyesen, and Baron (2019) mention in their results the negative impact of family problems on expatriate success. However, they also highlight the expatriate's friends and family relationships and support as external factors contributing to the expatriate's success. They do teach, that the support from the family is vital for developing resilience-based characteristics in the international assignees, which contributes to the expatriate success and they share in the discussion the importance of the family support programs prepared by the companies, as a form of demonstrating respect and support for the family members.

**“The expatriate experience: the factors of international assignment success.”**  
(Sarkiunaite and Rocke, 2015)

Another complex study was written by Sarkiunaite and Rocke (2015) that focused generally on the expatriate's success and mentioned the importance of family support during the whole process. The interviews of 7 Lithuanian expatriates showed the significance of the support from the family members to the expatriates' adjustment and the success of the entire international assignment. The scientists pointed out that the support from family members influences the decrease of stress levels and enables easier adjustment to the international assignment. In causes and outcome of problems, they determined that a lack of support from the family members and a lack of their motivation causes various psychological problems which may cause failed assignment.

**“Role of social and organizational support in the adjustment of Tunisian self-initiated expatriates.”** (Khedher and Asadullah, 2019)

Khedher and Asadullah (2019) conducted semi-structured interviews with 26 Tunisian expatriates to explore the organizational and social support the workers experienced during their international assignments. The study has shown that assignees experience psychological problems while their international mobility and to overcome them, they use different coping strategies. These strategies spin around different sources of support, which expatriates receive from their families, peers, and the organization. The authors point out that the workers will always need to receive social support from their family members as their social resources are depleted during the expatriate mobility. They state that family members and especially the spouse are key

sources of social support for the international assignee. And also mentioned the smoother adjustment of the worker, when the family remains positive towards the new country and work of the international worker. Additionally, as in the previously mentioned study, difficulties met by the family influenced the assignee and the assignment negatively, to such an extent, that the managers were willing to abandon the assignment when one of the family members was unable to fit in. This study put a focus not only on the children and spouses but also parents and siblings of the assignee. Some expatriates mentioned the importance of the “blessing” and “encouragement” coming from their parents in the success of their adjustment and the success of the assignment. The support that expatriates receive from their families may be in different forms, such as: sharing feelings and emotions, discussing adjustment issues, adjustment itself, offering sympathies, accepting host-country culture, showing concern and accepting the decision to participate in the international assignment, encouragement, praying, calling and listening to the expatriates (including topics of international assignment).

**“Work-and family-role adjustment of different types of global professionals: Scale development and validation.”** (Shaffer, et. al, 2016)

One research paper written by Shaffer, Reiche, Dimitrova, Lazarova, Chen, Westman, and Wurtz (2016) covered a data gathered from 1231 expatriates and business travellers to create a model of the family- and work- role adjustment of global employees that can be further used as a diagnostic tool for processes of selection, training, and support of the employees and their families. They divided their research sample into different groups of international workers and also checked in more detail what are the differences between them. As this thesis focuses on expatriates in general the following statements are presented without the comparison of all the groups. The researchers showed that the concept of family and work adjustment is positively related, the family instrumental and emotional support is significant and is positively related to the family-role adjustment. For global assignees, the emotional and instrumental family support were important inputs to at least one form of adjustment (work or family). And lastly relevant to this thesis, family resources (in this case family instrumental support) were likely to affect the adjustment of expatriates.

**“Gender issues and family concerns for women with international careers: Female expatriates in Western multinational corporations in Taiwan.”** (Tzeng, 2006)

The aim of the research conducted by Tzeng (2006) was to look into the stereotyping in discrimination against female expatriates. However, Tzeng (2006) did include the factor of the family support of 21 female expatriates in Taiwan. The interviews showed, that the married females who participated in this research repeatedly revealed a crucial theme of the need for different kinds of social support, especially coming from their families. The researchers stated that expatriates often need the support of their spouses and families to succeed on an international assignment, which shows the importance of the general support of the family for the expatriates.

**“An exploratory study into organizational repatriates’ emotional support network.”** (van Gorp, et. al, 2017)

As the definition of the success of international assignment does include the factor of successful repatriation, thus the topic of re-entry and the family support during this process is covered in this part of the thesis. The data collected by Van Gorp, Boroş, Bracke, and Stevens (2017) during interviews with 27 Belgian ex-expatriates showed that the partner and children are a crucial form of social support. However, the authors also state that they may have a negative effect on the expatriate if they don’t adapt well and it should be considered a very important topic, due to the family not having similar work routines and networks in comparison to expatriates, the foreign assignment is especially challenging for them. The researchers named a very important factor that occurs during the international assignment and during the re-entry process and it is “stress transmission” from the family to the expatriate. Additional point is, that expatriates with a well-re-adjusted partner, have less distress while re-entering processes.

**“A “dramaturgical” analysis of spouse role enactment in expatriation.”** (Davoine, et. al, 2013)

The social role of expatriates’ spouses in international assignments was examined in another study written by Davoine, Ravasi, Salamin, and Cudré -Mauroux (2013) and based on interviews with 40 spouses. The authors presented many different forms of support that the partners give to expatriates in different contexts, the most valued spousal support was named to be emotional support and esteem support. The

research showed the importance of the supporting role to the international assignment in general. Additionally, they stated, that the partners bring social and psychological support in the backstage, they manage resources for the assignee, and in the context of this study, which focused on government-related positions, they also represent their partners on the front stage, and thus, they participated in work-related activities. The research also presented an important statement that until now wasn't mentioned in any of the research above. A significant finding, that occurred during the gender analysis of 40 male and female spouses, revealed the higher emphasis of male partners on the psychological support given to their female spouses in the backstage, which means the female assignees received in general more psychological support and experienced a higher value-added than male assignees. The authors mentioned that the gender difference in this specific role of the spouses should be recognized, discussed, and considered while training and preparation programs for the expatriates.

**“The supportive expatriate spouse: an ethnographic study of spouse involvement in expatriate careers.”** (Lauring and Selmer, 2010)

The study conducted by Lauring and Selmer (2010) describes the situation of 16 Dutch families in Saudi Arabia. The authors used observations and interviews to see the involvement of the spouses in the expatriates' careers. One very important part of their studies focused on the spouses' support and involvement. The spouses stated, that without them the managers would have had a very difficult time working in Saudi Arabia, as they took care of all the matters at home and it helps the expatriates to feel at home while being in a different country with especially different culture. The spouses also mentioned that the managers spend an “awful” amount of time at work which would have not been possible if their spouses were not at home. The wives were responsible for organizing dinner parties for their and other expatriates' families, which in some cases was an amazing opportunity for the husbands to discuss some work problems or matters or simply bring them closer together and positively influence their work cooperation. The dinner parties also created future opportunities for the expatriates, as they were also organized for the representatives from Nederland. The spouses help their husbands with networking and were creating important relationships which could potentially improve their families' lives. The authors also described a case of the spouses uniting together and discussing a problem of their husbands' long

working week and repeatedly reported tiredness with the headquarter, which shows how invested they were in their husbands' well-being.

The table below (Table 1) represents the influence of the family support on the different, identified based on the articles, aspects influencing the expatriates' success. The definition of the success of international assignment and success of the expatriate is complex, however, all articles mentioned above consider some aspect influencing the contribution to the success in both fields. The influence of family support on stability was mentioned the least in the given articles, but it doesn't lessen the impact of the stable home on the performance of individuals. Also as we can see in the table, not every article specifically mentions that the support influences the success of an international assignment. Nevertheless, the pool shows that the support influences all the given factors of expatriates' life in different situations and at different levels. The support of the family is one of the crucial elements in the expatriates' success and is shown in different dimensions, which is proven by these 11 articles.

Table 1. Influence of the family support on different aspects contributing to the expatriates' performance and success of the international assignment.

Aspects influencing expatriates success Publications	loneliness	career well-being	stress management	work-life balance	stability	IA the decision of the	general adjustment	IA success
Davoine, et. al, (2013)		x					x	x
France, et. al, (2019)			x					x
Khedher and Asadullah (2019)	x			x	x	x	x	x
Lauring and Selmer(2010)		x		x				
Mäkelä, et. al, (2011)	x	x		x				
Mäkelä and Suutari (2011),	x	x	x	x	x		x	
Sarkiunaite and Rocke (2015)			x				x	x



Shaffer, et. al, (2016)							x	
Shah, et. al, (2019)		x	x	x			x	
Tzeng (2006)								x
Van Gorp, et. al, (2017)			x				x	x

### 5.1.2. Family impact on expatriates' well-being

This thesis focuses on the expatriates' success, however, many factors contribute to the process of the assignment and expatriates becoming successful. The factor of expatriates' well-being does belong to one of them, according to the thesis of Wang (2001) where the author states the importance of well-being on the expatriate performance and furthermore on the success of the assignments. Thus below are the found articles that aim to make the point on the topic of the family influencing expatriates' well-being.

**“Role of social and organizational support in the adjustment of Tunisian self-initiated expatriates.”** (Khedher and Asadullah, 2019)

Khedher and Asadullah (2019) wrote an article, which was focused on the experience of Tunisian expatriates for organizational and social support that they experienced during their international assignment in the host country. The interviews with 26 Tunisian expatriates revealed many important findings related to the general family support of the expatriate, which was mentioned in the previous part of this paper. However, that was not the only angle covered by the authors. Consequently, some other references are on the topic of family influencing the expatriate's well-being. First of all, one point mentioned already above, is that the family difficulties, problems, and troubles do influence the well-being of the expatriates negatively. The interviewed expatriates mentioned that they did have problems with declaring their well-being state when their family members were in distress. The authors also affirm that family members are important supplies of support in maintaining the well-being state. Thus the positivity of the family influence on the well-being of the expatriate can only be defined when the status of the family is positive in terms of well-being. The authors do state the importance of acknowledging the fact that the family can influence the

workers and their work and point out, that they should be an important factor considered by the companies in different processes of an international assignment.

**“Keeping the family side ticking along” An exploratory study of the work-family interface in the experiences of rotational assignees and frequent business travelers.”** (Baker and Ciuk, 2015)

In order to explore the work-family interface, Baker and Ciuk (2015) wrote a research paper based on interviews with 20 international workers, 18 of them were European, one Pakistani and one Columbian and the sample had 19 males and 1 female. However, the study does not focus solely on the expatriates' well-being, there are still mentions, that are important in this field. The authors emphasize the problem of the well-being of the family to be important when considering the well-being of the expatriate. As well as they do include in their reasoning the “spillover” effect, which will be explained in more detail in the further part of this research review.

**“Let it be: expatriate couples' adjustment and the upside of avoiding conflicts.”** (Van Erp, et. al, 2011)

Van Erp, Giebels, Van der Zee, and Van Duij (2011) focus on the examination of the impact of conflict avoidance between psychological adjustment and conflicts in the couples where a partner participates in an international assignment. The sample included 45 couples, most of them Dutch, and the authors tested their relationship based on the responses related to highly stressful situations, problems, and challenges. They concluded, that organizations planning and executing international assignments should invest more in addressing the problems of the family- personal- and spouses-conflicts, and the conflict avoidance if they want their international assignment to be successful. However, even more important in the context of this study is, they state that organizations should not only provide help and support for their families out of responsibility and respect but especially because it is proven that satisfaction and well-being „cross over” from one person to another (from family member to an expatriate) and positive features “spill over” from one domain to the other (work-home domains). Again they also point out that the same effect happens with negative features or emotions such as strain and stress. It is important to notice, that a happy family may assure productive workers, thus happy family may help with the success of the international assignment.

**“Managing the well-being of temporary skilled migrants.”** (Bahn, 2015)

Sussanne Bahn (2015) investigated the topic of international employees in order to better understand the stressors influencing the workers' well-being. Based on the 54 conducted interviews with international workers coming from all over the world and working in Australia, the author states that when the spouse had difficulty assimilating in the host country, it affected the workers negatively in terms of their well-being. The sample of this study not only included the investigation of expatriates, named in this study as agency representatives and business representatives (24 interviews) but also the point of view of skilled workers, such as engineers, specialist managers, and HR managers. This research presented another interesting finding, the author found out, that the need for support from the company was higher among the workers that relocated with their families in comparison to single workers and those, that decided to travel without their significant others and children. 2/3 of the participants of this study had spouses and children and half of the sample travelled to Australia with their families. This may show us an important, negative relation between the success of the international assignment and the family factor, thus it also affirms that the family is an important element in the overall assessment of the international assignment, should be considered by the headquarters as a hazardous factor and should be given interest and support in every step of expatriates mobility. Bahn (2015) concluded, that the time constraint is also an important factor in the well-being of workers and their families. The family and employee adjustment to the new environment was not fulfilled in the shorter assignments, as when the employees and their family members look to return to the home country early, they fail to take all the measures needed to adjust and feel well in the environment and work. And also the study showed that if the partner did not adjust within the first few months, it influenced negatively the whole assignment. Thus it creates an emphasis that the organization should consider very important in planning and executing international assignments.

**“Opportunities and challenges for expatriates in emerging markets: an exploratory study of Korean expatriates in India.”** (Kim and Tung, 2013)

Based on the survey of 67 Korean expatriate managers in India and the interviews with 32 of them, Kim and Tung (2013) conducted a study investigating the factors that impacted the Korean expatriates' fulfilment and satisfaction with an international assignment considering the challenges and opportunities related to working and living

in India. The study showed that family matters can impact the overall satisfaction of the expatriate with the international assignment. Work and life satisfaction is one of the measures of a person's well-being (Boarini, 2006), thus it is a significant finding in terms of the family influencing the expatriates' well-being. The authors concluded, that managers were generally satisfied when they were presented with a good career opportunity and they had the presence of a supportive family. This study also focused on a term known as Confucian, which is placing the career over the family matters and it's common in the Korean culture, thus this also shows the importance of the family protection given by the international company and emphasizes the importance of the relationships with family members, as taking into account the previously mentioned studies, the well-being of the family influences the well-being of the expatriates (Van Erp, et. al, 2011; Baker, Ciuk, 2015).

### 5.1.3. Family impact on expatriates' adjustment and success

The success of the expatriate is the main topic of this study, however before we look into the impact of the well-being of the family on the expatriates' success it is important to know what is the impact of the family on the expatriates' success, with at first excluding the factor of family well-being. As already mentioned in the definition of the international assignment success, adjustment of expatriates plays a significant role in ensuring the success of the international assignment and is a precondition to the success (DeNisi and Sonesh, 2016). This part will present the articles that focus on the relationship between family and expatriate adjustment, failed adjustment, success, and failure.

**“The roles of expatriates' spouses among dual career couples.”** (Mäkelä, et. al, 2011)

The study by Mäkelä, Käsälä and Suutari (2011) mentioned already in the part of the family's general support of the expatriates, focused on the assessment of the role of family members in dual-career couples during an international assignment. 39 Finish expatriates (16 female, 23 male) that had working spouses and had at least one year of a long international assignment participated in the interviews. Connected to the general spouses' support was the topic of the support needed for the adjustment in the host country. Some of the interviewed expatriates stated that they needed their spouse's support in order to adjust to a new situation. The authors also declared that the partner's support is essential in the successful adjustment. Additionally, managers

stated, that in some cases, partners provided easier access to some social circles in the host state, which made the adjustment easier. The emotional level support given by the spouses to the expatriates was of huge value. Additionally, the managers reported that it was necessary for the expatriates to discuss with their partners some aspects of their work problems and issues as well as generally their career plans, concerns, and ideas, which did help with problem-solving and general success of the expatriate and the international assignment.

**“Coping with work-family conflicts in the global career context.”** (Mäkelä and Suutari, 2011),

Once more a study already presented in this thesis, in the part on general support of the family written by Mäkelä and Suutari (2011), where they put a focus on the work-life conflicts happening during the international assignments and different coping strategies related to solving the problems. The interviews with 20 Finish international managers who had done more than 3 international assignments helped with the declaration, that the choice of acceptance of international assignment was usually made with the partner and the family, and the thorough cooperative planning of the new job position abroad was proven to be a factor of a successful assignment. Based on the responses of 15 males and 5 females, the authors also stated, that the challenges in the problem-solving area between the family members have an impact on the success of the expatriate adjustment and they also affect their concentration on the adjustment and given tasks, which contributes to assignment success.

**“Role of social and organizational support in the adjustment of Tunisian self-initiated expatriates.”** (Khedher and Asadullah, 2019)

Article written by Khedher and Asadullah (2019) is mentioned for the third time in this thesis, as it is not only contributing to the topic of the family’s general support of the expatriate and the family influencing the expatriate's well-being, but it also takes into consideration the adjustment of the expatriate and the success of the international assignment. The interviews with 26 Tunisian expatriates revealed the aspects of the organizational and social support the workers experienced in the host country during the international assignment. The findings mentioned that the partner was an important source of the smoother adjustment of the manager. The positivity of the family towards the new country and the new assignment makes the adjustment process easier and faster and the adjustment of the family favours the adjustment of the assignee.

Contrary, family problems impacted the assignees' adjustment and the success of the assignment negatively, in such a way, that the expatriates were willing to go back to their home countries and terminate the assignment when one of the family members was unable to fit in. In terms of the children's influence on the adjustment, it was stated, that well-adjusted children benefit the adjustment of the expatriate. This study put a focus not only on the children and spouses but also parents and siblings of the assignee. The managers refer to the importance of the "encouragement" and "blessing" coming from their parents in the success of their adjustment and success of their assignment. In terms of single and married expatriates, those that were accompanied by their family during their assignment adjusted better in the host country than their single friends. Therefore the family plays a key role in the adjustment.

**"A "dramaturgical" analysis of spouse role enactment in expatriation."** (Davoine, et. al, 2013)

Once more the topic of family's general support is also related to the family influencing the adjustment and success of the expatriate. The social role of expatriates' spouses in international assignments was examined in the study written by Davoine, Ravasi, Salamin, and Cudré -Mauroux (2013) and based on interviews with 40 spouses. This study was also mentioned in the family's general support part, however, it does also include the aspect of adjustment and success of the expatriates. The authors state, that the partners' support directly influences the adjustment of expatriates and also positively impacts the job performance. They do find different measures and influences within different roles of the expatriates' partners, however, they concluded that the impact of the spouse on the expatriates does exist and is positive when the spouses support their partners.

**"American Expatriates Abroad: From Neophytes to Cosmopolitans."** (Tung, 1998)

Tung (1998) conducted a study based on the surveys of 409 expatriates on assignment in 51 countries around the world. The study aimed to examine many aspects of the importance of international assignments, however, in contribution to this thesis the focus was put on the mechanisms used to cope with stress during the international assignment. This was the part of the study that also focused on the family of the expatriate and Tung also mentioned the importance of the family's support in the success of the international assignment. The study examined the various mechanisms

that expatriates use to cope with strain and stress associated with the new environment, job, and the performance of their assignment. The managers perceived different methods to be the most useful in smoothing the process of adaptation in the host country. There were two of them that focused on the family factor, such as: communicating with friends and family back home (home country) and spending more time with one's family. The study also revealed, that the expatriates who are living with a partner or family or who have children often looked forward to the comforts of home to cope with the strains and stress of working abroad. The single expatriates tend to use the mechanism of connecting with the family back at home more than those who travelled to the host country with their families and what was interesting is, female expatriates used this coping mechanism more often than their male colleagues. One more interesting finding was that the more international assignment an expatriate already participated in, the less the coping mechanism of communicating with the family back home was used. This shows that with more international assignments, expatriates may either use coping mechanisms that work best for them on an individual level, or feel less need to use coping mechanisms, as the adjusting to the first host country could have made it easier for them to adjust in another, as the country or assignment might be different, but the experience is similar. The need to use coping mechanisms of spending more time with the family was raising with the age of expatriates. Another finding of this study was that the family has a stabilizing effect on the expatriate and the international assignment.

**“Sources of support and expatriate performance: the mediating role of expatriate adjustment.”** (Kraimer, et. al, 2001)

Another view on the topic is presented in the study written by Kraimer, Wayne, and Jaworski (2001). Their main focus was on 3 sources of support in assisting expatriate performance and adjustment. The sources were: perceived organizational support, leader-member exchange, and spousal support for expatriates' work and life adjustment to the new environment. The study was conducted based on the survey responses from 213 dyads expatriate-supervisor from 30 different countries. The authors, as proven in many previous studies also those mentioned above, expected to see the positive relationship between spousal support and the expatriate's work and general adjustment. However they come up with very interesting finding, which does not support most of the literature on the topic, namely, their findings were not significant

and thus, this hypothesis was not supported. Additionally, a point worth mentioning is the author's findings on the topic of the relationship between adjustment and performance. They did confirm that a better-adjusted employee will perform better in the task given to him, which influences the success of the expatriate and the international assignment.

**“Expatriates’ psychological withdrawal from international assignments: work, network and family influence.”** (Shaffer and Harrison, 1998)

A complex study on expatriates conducted by Shaffer and Harrison (1998) presents a model of expatriates' choices to quit their international assignments. This model considers of few measures in this withdrawal process: the project-based nature of the assignment, the role of adjustment of the expatriates and their families, and the importance of several nonwork and family context factors. The study was done with the use of two sets of questionnaires, one for the expatriates and one for the spouses. In total the authors gathered 452 responses from expatriates and 252 from the spouses, which lived in 45 countries, 65% of the expatriates were Americans, the other 35% came from different countries and all of them worked for American Multinational Companies. The authors presented several hypotheses important for this thesis. In terms of the family factor, they did not find a significant relationship between the responsibility, that the expatriates have towards their family, negatively affecting the expatriates' decisions to quit the international assignment earlier. The second family-related hypothesis studied the effect of an expatriate's family responsibility on the relationship between an expatriate's feelings towards the assignment and nonwork-related feelings (such as job satisfaction, organizational commitment, and nonwork satisfaction) and withdrawal cognitions, reducing the effect of job satisfaction and commitment while enlarging the impact of nonwork satisfaction. The findings were, as the hypothesis itself, very complex. The nonwork satisfaction and family responsibility term had a significant impact on expatriate withdrawal cognitions. The effect was small, however, it hides significant differences in the impact of nonwork satisfaction. The question of nonwork satisfaction effect on withdrawal cognitions for expatriates with no family members accompanying them on assignment was positive and it showed a tendency to decrease with the higher range of family responsibility until becoming negative for those expatriates with a partner and two or more children accompanying the expatriates on the international assignment. Thus,



this hypothesis was partially significant and showed the effect of the family on the decision to quit the international assignment.

The third and fourth family-related hypotheses focused on the exclusive effect of family responsibility on adjustment and satisfaction. The respondents provided the information, that the expatriates' family responsibility had a negative impact on expatriate job satisfaction. However, the authors did not find a significant influence on expatriate nonwork satisfaction and the cultural adjustment elements.

The authors focused also additionally only on the spouses of the expatriates and their adjustment. Their findings presented, that the spouses' adjustment appeared as an important negative influencer of expatriate withdrawal cognitions. However, this statement was only supported by the matched samples of expatriates and their spouses. The moderating effects of the partner's adjustment did not have an impact on moderating the measures of withdrawal cognitions. The results present, that there is a strong positive influence of the partner's adjustment on the nonwork satisfaction of the expatriate. For the matched sample of expatriates and spouses, both nonwork and work satisfaction were positively related to the spouse's overall satisfaction. Additionally, the spouse experience variables, especially the spouse adjustment but also spouse satisfaction and the perception of the living standard, influenced positively the interaction and cultural adjustment. The spouse satisfaction did not have an impact on the cross-cultural adjustment dimensions. The spouse's experience variables weren't linked to expatriate work adjustment.

With all these statements, some of them fully, some of them partially supported by the findings, we can safely say there is an impact of the family and spouse on the expatriate's adjustment in the host country, general satisfaction, performance, and their willingness to terminate the assignment. This is also consistent with the previously mentioned spill-over theory.

### **“Motivation and adjustment of self-initiated expatriates: the case of expatriate academics in South Korea” (Froese, 2012)**

Froese (2012) conducted 30 interviews with international assignees in Korea and came out with few significant for this study findings. In terms of choosing the expatriation, the family and especially the spouse played a crucial role while the decision-making process. It was even emphasized by the fact that some of the responders had a Korean partner and they stated this fact as an important motivation to participate in an

international assignment. Additionally, the family had an impact on the adjustment of the employees, again in the case of assignees with Korean spouses, the process of adjustment was smoother, especially the interaction adjustment. The expatriates motivated to expatriate by the family were more satisfied with their adjustment in general and particularly the interaction adjustment.

**“Home alone and often unprepared—intercultural communication training for expatriated partners in German MNCs.”** (Kupka, et. al, 2008)

Kupka, Everett, and Cathro (2008) investigated the topic of expatriates' families and their cultural preparation for the international assignments. Based on the experiences of 141 German expatriated partners in 36 countries the authors found a significant lack of preparation that the spouses received. The researchers concluded, that only 1/3 of all spouses receive any type of traditional international communication training and just more than half of those, who had participated in the training perceived it as helpful. The authors also mention that these conditions are disturbing because of the proven spill-over effect of badly adjusted spouses on their expatriated partners' assignment performance. The negligence of the partners' international communication classes develops the problems of psychological contracts, which may cause intense reactions, that then affect negatively the family members, expatriates, the international assignment, and the business.

**“The expatriate experience: the factors of international assignment success.”** (Sarkiunaite and Rocke, 2015)

Another previously mentioned study by Sarkiunaite and Rocke (2015) focused on the factors of the international assignment success and mentioned the importance of family during the whole process. The responses of 7 Lithuanian expatriates working for multinational companies abroad for 4 to 12 years, showed the importance of the family in the eyes of the expatriate, as they were aware of the influence of their family state on their personal success, thus also on the success of the international assignment. The authors noted the important factors influencing the success of the international assignment and they named once again the family factor having an important role in this process. Some of the expatriates' responses on what factors determined their personal adjustment were also related to the family attitude towards the international assignment. One factor of unsuccessful adjustment to the new environment was the disappointment of the family member. The family had also a

significant impact on the occurrence of the problems, a positive impact on the problem-solving processes, and the negative impact as the family was also named a cause of some of those problems. The authors concluded, that an expatriate's family situation, the family's ability to adjust, motivation and positive attitude towards the move, the host country, culture, and the assignment, and support for the employee are the factors that meaningfully condition the success of expatriates' performance and the success of an entire international assignment. In order to successfully implement and execute the international assignments, organizations should focus not only on their expatriates but also on expatriates' family members.

**“Nonlinear influences of stressors on general adjustment: the case of Japanese expatriates and their spouses.” (Takeuchi, et. al, 2007)**

Takeuchi, Lepak, Marinova, and Yun (2007) surveyed 170 Japanese expatriates and their spouses in order to study the parental demand and culture shock of the families and their effect on the international assignment. Two out of four of their hypothesis were related to the topic of this thesis. First was the negative linear relationship between the parental demands, which simply speaking means the time and resources needed to support the family, and the expatriate general adjustment. This hypothesis, however, was not supported by the results of the survey. The impact was seen in the general spouse's adjustment, which according to other studies could potentially create stress in the relationship and influence the expatriate in a more significant way. The second hypothesis focused also on the parental demand and general adjustment of the expatriate, but the relationship was supposed to be curvilinear. For the low level of parental demand, the relationship should be negative, for higher levels, the relationship should shift to less negative or not significant. This statement also did not find support in the sample responses. The authors make a note that both of the findings could be gender-related, which was not included in their study. Their findings present, that the spouse is more burdened to take care of the family and this measure doesn't affect the expatriate, thus also the international assignment. This study, however, determines the significance of the family in expatriate adjustment, specifically since partners play an important role in the adjustment process of expatriates. If the spouses are adjusting well, they can reduce the needs of other family members and support expatriates to concentrate more on their performance, which can ultimately impact the success of the

foreign assignment. If the partners aren't well adjusted, they can have a negative influence on expatriates' adjustment.

**“Sources of support and expatriation: a multiple stakeholder perspective of expatriate adjustment and performance in Malaysia.”** (Abdul Malek, et. al, 2015)

The research conducted by Abdul Malek, Budhwar, and Reiche (2015) analyses the role of support from the host-country nationals and the multinational corporations for the adjustment of expatriates and their families during an international assignment in Malaysia. The authors collected 134 matched surveys from expatriates and their spouses. They presented 7 hypotheses and 3 of them were relevant to the topic of this thesis. First, the authors found that the expatriate adjustment in the host country has a positive relationship with the expatriate performance, thus it also contributes to the success of the international assignment. Second, the authors expected the impact of the spouse adjustment on the expatriate's adjustment to be positive, however, this was not supported by this study sample. Additionally, with the rejected hypothesis of partner's adjustment impacting the expatriate's adjustment and the supported hypothesis of expatriate adjustment influencing the work performance, the partners' adjustment impact on the expatriate performance was tested. This hypothesis was marginally supported. As this statement contradicts many previously studied samples, the small significance level was explained by the authors as possibly coming from the partner leading a more limited life away from the international assignee's work environment.

**“Dominant stressors on expatriate couples during international assignments.”** (Brown, 2008)

Brown (2008) focused in his study on the factors contributing to stress in the expatriates' relationships. The stress factors vary between the expatriates' and the spouses' roles. As the stress factor is unfavourable to the international assignment success, Brown conducted the surveys with 152 expatriates working in London and came up with a list of the stress factors rated by the mean. Not spending enough time with the partner was placed in the first place, 5<sup>th</sup> the need to manage too many contradictory demands and expectations, 6<sup>th</sup> concerns over the family, and 7<sup>th</sup> partners disappointment with the assignment. These were the factors directly connected with the family. The study presented, that the expatriates rated those family-related factors as more stressful than in the case of the spouses, which chose other factors. However

Brown (2008) itself states, that this could be due to the fact, that 88% of the spouses were females, thus it could be a more gender-related finding, nonetheless, this does not exclude the finding. This proves the importance of the family in the expatriate's work abilities and contributes to the success of the international assignment.

**“Japanese expatriates' management in global assignments: A review and research agenda.”** (Dang and Rammal, 2020)

Dang and Rammal (2020) investigated the worldwide human resource management literature which focuses on the critical role the expatriates' family has in the performance and success or the failure of the international assignments. The authors found a gap in the publications and realized that the topic wasn't thoroughly studied in the case of Japanese expatriates, thus they conducted a review of 75 publications in order to bring more understanding and support to the companies and the expatriates. The authors look into different phases of an international assignment and the importance of the family in all of them.

First of all, the authors state there is an impact of the family on the international assignment success in the case of Japanese expatriates and they give some guidance and remarks to consider to the multinational companies and to the expatriates and their families. In the pre-assignment phase, the families should be considered and included in the training and preparation processes, for example, their participation in the pre-departure training programs. During the assignment, the companies should provide support for partners' adjustment and careers, and children's education. Japanese expatriates' partners influence the adjustment and performance of the expatriate and have an impact on business relationships. The Japanese parents find the education of their children very important, thus the support for children's education is also important for the success of the international assignment.

The experience of the families, hence the experience and work of the expatriates, their adjustment, and their performance could be elevated, according to the authors, by providing the support in social networking, as these groups provide support and may control the behaviours of family members and expatriates.

In the case of Japan, family-related problems significantly impact Japanese expatriates' failure, thus providing measures to ensure the family's well-being and stability can ensure the success of the international assignment. The authors also mention that even if the family is not present in the host country during the international

assignment, they should still be considered as an important factor of the assignment, thus they should also receive the support as well as the on-site family.

Dang and Ramal (2020) also consider the factor of extended family influencing the international assignee. Expatriates' parents influence the expatriation decisions, as often the Japanese expatriates are those providing help to the elderly, and moving to a different country would make it impossible for the parents to receive sufficient help. While researching for a manager to participate in the international assignment, companies should also investigate their out-of-work responsibilities and then accordingly, either support the manager in this area or choose another candidate.

**“Enhancing social integration and work performance: The role of expatriates' significant other.”** (Malek, et. al, 2013)

Malek, Jaguli, and Palil, (2013) surveyed 134 expatriates in Malaysia and their spouses, coming to an international assignment from the USA, UK, India, and Singapore, with an average contract of 2-3 years, to the study the topic of the role of expatriates' spouses in the expatriates' work performance. The focus of one of their hypothesis was to prove if the spouse's adjustment is positively related to expatriate performance. Their findings did not find a positive impact of the spouse's general adjustment on the expatriate task performance. The authors also stated the relationship between spouse interaction adjustment and expatriate task performance to be insignificant. The spouse's general adjustment did not have an impact on expatriate contextual performance as well. The only supported statement was that the spouse's interaction adjustment has an impact on expatriate contextual performance, which is an aspect of task performance. The new finding of the author presents that expatriate contextual performance influences work performance. However, the partners participating in this study did not have a direct influence on the task performance, they did influence positively other measures that contribute to the performance and the success of the international assignment.

**“Self-Initiated Expatriate Academic Performance in Malaysian Universities.”**  
(Ramalu, et. al, 2017)

Ramalu, Subramaniam, and Nadarajah (2017) conducted research on academic expatriates in Malaysia in order to investigate the factors influencing the research and teaching performance of academic expatriates. One of the three hypotheses was particularly interesting in the frames of this thesis, the positive relationship between

family support and the performance of the expatriates. 114 expatriates, 75% males and 25% females, responded to a survey, and based on their input, the hypothesis was supported, the family support factor had an impact on both teaching performance and research performance.

**“Why do international assignments fail? Expatriate families speak.”** (Cole and Nesbeth, 2014)

The members of separate 64 expatriate families who prematurely returned from an international assignment participated in the online survey, which provided data for the study by Cole and Nesbeth (2014). The study focused on the factors of international assignment failure and the role of the family in this process. The authors concluded, that the family issues and problems are not the primary sources of the international assignment failure. The most frequently stated reason for return was organization-related, however, the second most frequent cause of the assignment failure was family issues. Serious issues include mental health issues, marital problems, homesickness, medical emergencies, children’s problems at school (eg. bullying), and problems with locals. Other severe family issues involved domestic violence, alcoholism, and suicidal tendencies. The authors also added that the spill-over of partner problems to the expatriate plays an important role in the international assignment’s failure.

**“A key challenge in global HRM: adding new insights to existing expatriate spouse adjustment models.”** (Gupta, et. al, 2012)

Gupta, Banerjee, and Gaur (2012) interviewed 26 expatriates’ spouses from India. Even before starting the data analysis, the authors noticed, that 7 of the spouses didn’t accompany their husbands/wives during the international assignment or came back to the home country halfway into the assignment, which resulted in the termination of the assignment by the expatriate. The authors focus in their study mainly on the factors of spouses adjustment, which is not directly a topic of this thesis, however, the case of the 7 spouses mentioned above shows the impact of the spouse’s inability to adjust on the failure of the international assignment and it is also presented in Gupta’s et. al. (2012) model of the expatriate and the expatriate spouse willingness to relocate.

**“Marital status and work outcomes of self-initiated expatriates: Is there a moderating effect of gender?” (Selmer and Luring, 2011)**

Selmer and Luring (2011) used an online questionnaire to create a data sample of 428 expatriate academics, in order to investigate the impact of the marriage factor on work effectiveness and work performance and the moderating effect of gender in marriage influencing the work effectiveness and performance. Their study did not support the statement of the influence of gender in marriage on work effectiveness and performance, however, even more relevant for the topic of this thesis, the authors found a relationship between being married and work performance and effectiveness. The authors commented that married assignees have a tendency to be better adjusted than unmarried expatriates and adjusted expatriates can experience a feeling of well-being and be more confident in living and working in a foreign country. They can also invest more energy and time in their work accomplishments, which positively impacts effectiveness and performance.

**5.2. Impact of the family members’ well-being on the expatriates’ success**

This part presents the articles that put focus on the family members’ well-being factor and its potential impact on the expatriates’ success and shows the aspects that haven’t yet been mentioned before in this thesis, as well as the explanation of the previously mentioned impact of the family on expatriate well-being, adjustment, and success playing a role in this review with the use of “spill-over” and “cross-over” theories. The articles are given in no specific order. The further part contains the summary of the research review and the answer to the research question.

As mentioned in the methodology, the approach to this literature review was divided into two parts, the first one focused on the impact of the family in general on the expatriates and their work, however, this doesn’t make a sufficient point in the research question. It is important to recognize the processes that occur between family members, not only in the case of expatriates and international assignments.

Firstly, below are mentioned three complex studies already described in the previous parts, but this time with the focus on the research question of this thesis.



**“Japanese expatriates' management in global assignments: A review and research agenda.”** (Dang and Rammal, 2020)

Dang and Rammal (2020) already mentioned above investigated the critical role of the expatriates' families in the performance and success of the international assignments. The authors found an impact of the expatriates' families on the international assignment success in the case of Japan. They stated, that the family-related problems have a positive relationship with expatriates' failure, and supporting the family's well-being and stability ensures the success of the expatriate and the international assignment. The authors also mention that even if the family is not present in the host country during the international assignment, their well-being also affects the assignment, thus they should also receive the support as well as the on-site family.

**“The expatriate experience: the factors of international assignment success.”** (Sarkiunaite and Rocke, 2015)

A study by Sarkiunaite and Rocke (2015), which was mentioned already twice before and focuses on the factors contributing to the international assignment success. The authors noted the most important factors influencing the success of the international assignment and among others, they named the family factor as having an important role in this process. They presented the influence of expatriates' family well-being on expatriates' personal success, thus also on the success of the international assignment. The adjustment of the expatriates that was previously proven to be a factor of expatriate success (Black and Gregersen, 1991) was influenced by other factors mentioned in this study, namely, the disappointment (which is a symbol of unwell-being) of the family member had a negative impact on the adjustment of expatriates, thus also on the international assignment. The authors concluded, that an expatriate's family situation, the family's ability to adjust (symbol of well-being), motivation and positive attitude towards the move, the host country, culture, and the assignment, and support for the employee are the factors that meaningfully condition the success of expatriates' performance and the success of an entire international assignment.

**“Role of social and organizational support in the adjustment of Tunisian self-initiated expatriates.”** (Khedher and Asadullah, 2019)

Article written by Khedher and Asadullah (2019) was mentioned three times already, as it focuses on the experience of Tunisian expatriates in the host country and

describes the organizational and social support they were provided during the international assignment, the family factor in the social support of the expatriates, the influence of the family, broken down to different family members, on the expatriate's well-being, the adjustment of the expatriate and the success of the international assignment. The authors state that family members and especially the spouse are key sources of social support for the international assignee. The results of the interviews mentioned that the partner was an important factor influencing the expatriate's adjustment, and as it is mentioned in the definition of expatriate's success, the adjustment plays a very important role in the success of the international assignment and is the pre-condition to success. The positivity of the partner towards the assignment and the host country, which can be also viewed as the well-being of the family, increases the possibility of the easier and faster adjustment process and the adjustment of the spouse favours the adjustment of the assignee. The authors also looked into the influence of different family members and found the children's adjustment impact on the assignees' adjustment, thus also their success. Parents and siblings of the assignee also participate in the process of better adjustment and ensure the well-being of the expatriate, by, for example, giving the "encouragement" and "blessing". Contrary, family problems, which can lead to the family experiencing a state of "unwell-being", influenced negatively the expatriates' adjustment and the assignment success. Therefore the family plays a key role in the adjustment. Additionally, comparing the single and married expatriates, those accompanied by their family in the host country adjusted better than their single friends.

Secondly, the processes of spill-over and cross-over theories, which are explained in the theory and definition part, between family members and life-work balance will be used as a tool to connect the first part of this study and the second part, which means the impact of the family members on the expatriates' success and the impact of the well-being of the family on the expatriate' success.

Table 2. The influence of the family members on the expatriates and international assignments.

	Author, date of publication	Method	Sample size	Sample from/in	Impact of the family support on the success of the International Assignment	Family impact on the well-being of expatriates (reason)	Family impact on easier adjustment of the expatriate (factor/condition)	Family impact on the expatriates' success and the success factors (reason)
1	Abdul Malek, et. al, 2015	surveys	134 couples: expatriates-spouses	Different countries /Malaysia			Insignificant (factor: spouse adjustment)	Marginally positive (spouses adjustment influencing the expatriate's work performance)
2	Bahn, 2015	Interviews	54 expatriates	Different countries /Australia			Partially negative (cond. slow or no adjustment of the family)	Negative (unwell-being of the family)
3	Baker and Ciuk, 2015	interviews	20 expatriates	18 European, 1 Pakistani, 1 Columbian/NG		Positive(family well-being, spill-over theory)		
4	Brown, 2008	surveys	152 expatriates	Different countries /UK		Significant/positive (family being a factor influencing the stress level of the expatriates, in some cases,		

						stress relief factor)		
5	Cole and Nesbeth, 2014	survey	64 members of different families who prematurely returned from IA	Different countries				Negative (family problems as the second most mentioned reason for termination of international assignment)
6	Dang and Rammal, 2020	Literature review	75 publications	-	positive		positive	Positive (family well-being and stability), Negative (family problems)
7	Davoine, et. al, 2013	interviews	40 spouses	Switzerland/different countries	positive		Positive(conditional supportive family)	Positive(supportive family)
8	France, et. al, 2019	Interviews, surveys, focus groups	102 expatriates	USA, UK, Australia, Canada, EU Countries/China, Taiwan, Macau	positive			Negative (family problems)
9	Froese, 2012	interviews	30 expatriates	Different countries /Korea			Positive(mostly, but not solely the reason was Korean spouse in Korea)	
10	Gupta, et. al, 2012	interviews	26 spouses	India/different countries				Negative (spouse's inability to adjust)

11	Khedher, Asadullah (2019)	interviews	26 expatriates	Tunisia/differed countries	positive	Negative(family in distress)/ positive (family well-being)	Positive (factor: well-adjusted family, social support coming from the family), Negative(factor: family experiencing problems)	Negative(difficulties experienced by the family)
12	Kim and Tung, 2013	survey	67 expatriates	Korea/India		Partially supported as positive		
13	Kraimer, et. al, 2001	survey	213 dyads expatriate - supervisor	Different countries	Not supported. Insignificant findings			Insignificant
14	Kupka, et. al, 2008	survey	141 couples, expatriate - spouse	Germany /different countries		Negative (insufficient support received by the spouses from the organization)		
15	Malek, et. al, 2013	surveys	134 couples: expatriates-spouses	Malaysia/ USA, UK, India, Singapore				Insignificant (cond: the impact of spouses' general adjustment on expatriate task and contextual performance; the spouses' interaction adjustment and expatriate

								task performance), positive (cond: spouse interaction adjustment and expatriate contextual performance)
16	Mäkelä, et. al, 2011	interviews	39 expatriates	Finland/not given	Positive		Positive	
17	Mäkelä and Suutari 2011	interviews	20 expatriates	Finland/different countries	Positive		Positive	
18	Ramalu, et. al. 2017	questionnaires	114 expatriates	Different countries /Malaysia	Positive			Positive (family support on performance)
19	Sarkiunait e, Rocke, 2015	interviews	7 expatriates	Lithuania /different countries	Positive		Positive (factor: adjusted family), Negative (factor: issues related to the adjustment of the family)	Positive (supportive family, adjusted family)/negative (not supportive, unmotivated family)
20	Selmer and Lauring, 2011	questionnaire	428 expatriates	Different countries /Nordic countries			Positive (married assignees adjust better)	
21	Shaffer, et. al, 2016	Online surveys	1231 expatriates	-	positive		Positive (factor: the family instrumental and emotional support)	
22	Shaffer, Harrison, 1998	survey	452 expatriates, 252 spouses	Different countries			Positive on cultural adjustment	positive (the family responsibility isn't the

							(factors: spouse experience variables, adjustment, satisfaction, and perception of the living standard), non-significant in work adjustment	reason for termination of IS); negative, (spouse influencing the decision of assignment termination)
23	Shah, et. al, 2019	interviews	24 expatriates	India/different countries	Positive			
24	Takeuchi, et. al, 2007	survey	170 couples: expatriate-spouses	Japan/different countries			Inconclusive	Partially positive (the well-adjusted spouses can take away the burden of family problems, which results in expatriates' higher concentration on the job)
25	Tung, 1998	survey	409 expatriates	USA/different countries	Partially supported as positive	Positive (the family as a coping mechanism for stress related to work)		Stabilizing effect (the support of the family)
26	Tzeng, 2006	interviews	21 expatriates	Different countries /Taiwan	positive			

27	Van Erp, et. al, 2011	survey	45 couples (expatriates mostly men, spouses mostly women)	Mostly Netherland/different countries				Partially positive (condition: the happiness of the family)
28	Van Gorp, et. al, 2017	interviews	27 expatriates	Belgium/different countries	positive	Negative (not adjusted family)		Negative (stressed family)
29	Lauring and Selmer, 2010	Participant observations and interviews	16 families	Netherlands/Saudi Arabia	positive			

Table 2. presents the most important findings in the pool of all the articles. First, the impact of the family support on the success of the international assignment was mentioned in the pool 14 times, which means 14 studies from the pool directly covered the factor of the family support influencing the expatriate and international assignment and in 11 of them the family's support influence on the expatriate was one of the main questions of those studies. There were 8 aspects identified in all of these articles, that are influenced by the support of the family and which could potentially contribute to the success of an international assignment. Those are the influence of the family support on the loneliness of the expatriate, the care for the carer of the expatriates, the effect on the stress management and better conquer of stress effects, the support of the family ensuring work and personal life balance, family members' influence on the emotional, physical and existence stability of the expatriate, the family support influence on the decision of accepting or denying as well as terminating the international assignment and the influence of the family support on the general adjustment of the expatriate. In all but two articles the family support factor in the general success of the international assignment was described as positive, one was partially positive and one study sample did not give significant results, thus the hypothesis of spousal support effect on the work and general adjustment of the expatriates wasn't found to be significant and there was no meaningful effect found (Kraimer, et. al, 2001). 13 out of 14 studies did find the relationship to be significant and influence some of the aspects contributing to the success of the expatriate was



positive, this shows the importance of the family in the expatriates work-life. Additionally, the support can never be given in a negative way and the family members in a state of unwell-being or “difficult family situation” as the Sarkiunaite and Rocke (2015) named it in their study, can not provide the needed motivation and support for the expatriates (Sarkiunaite and Rocke, 2015), which, according to 13 articles mentioned above, does have an important role in the expatriate and international assignment success. This statement supports the research question of family members’ well-being influencing the success of the expatriates, by providing them on the daily basis with needed support.

When covering and defining the well-being state of the family it is also important to take a look into the well-being of the expatriates. Based on the theory of spill-over, the well-being in one domain should also influence the well being in other domains of life of this same individual, in the case of an international assignment, the personal well-being of the expatriate could influence the work well-being, performance, and possibly success, which is also consistent with the study of Malek and colleagues (2013), where the contextual performance influence positively the task performance of international managers. Thus, the effect of the family members on the well-being of the expatriate was examined, based on the given article pool. This effect was mentioned in 7 out of 29 articles. The findings, however, weren’t all one-sided. In 2 articles the family members influenced the well-being of the expatriates negatively, one article found both positive and negative effects based on different factors and 4 publications found a positive influence and including one in which the authors stated that the effect is partially supported by their sample as positive. The statements vary based on the factor of the family. The reasons for the negative influence were the contradicting factors of the well-being state of the family, such as the family wasn’t well adjusted in the host country (Van Gorp, et. al, 2017), the spouses weren’t receiving enough support from the company (Kupka, et. al, 2008) and the family was in distress (Khedher, Asadullah, 2019). The given factors are those that define unhappy family members and those who cannot state they feel generally well. This effect shows that the negative trait of the state of mind of the family members doesn’t influence the well-being of the expatriates positively and could contribute to the failure of the international assignment. However, the family is found to be also helpful in ensuring the well-being of the expatriates when they were in a state of well-being (Khedher, Asadullah, 2019; Baker and Ciuk, 2015),

e.g. the family members being a part of the coping mechanism of work-related stress (Tung, 1998). This effect is consistent with a cross-over effect, when the experiences of one individual influence, in the same way, the experiences of others close to them. It is important to notice that all these studies take into account different stages of the international assignments: pre-, during, and post-move, which shows that the effect stays consistent throughout the whole assignment duration and also takes into account different factors. This shows that there is a relationship between family members and the expatriates' well-being state and the domain of home influences the workspace and work performance. Connecting the findings of the influence of family well-being on the expatriates' success and the theory of cross-over could already show the effect of well-being on the international manager being positive and this raises the statement of how important are the family members in the general topic of international assignments.

However, the support coming from the family and the well-being of the expatriates does not define yet a successful or not successful international assignment. According to Blank and Gregersen (1991), the factor of adjustment of the expatriate plays a significant role in the success of the international assignment. Thus the impact of the family members on the expatriate adjustment was examined. The family members' influence on the adjustment of the expatriates was mentioned in 13 of 29 articles in the pool and the effect, as well as in the case of the influence on the well-being of the expatriates, varies based on the factors coming from the family, in 3 publications in the pool the authors found both positive and negative or insignificant relationship based on different factors. 10 times the positive impact of the family members on the international assignee was observed, based on a different factors, such as: spouse's experience, adjustment, satisfaction and perception of the living standard influencing positively the cultural adjustment of the expatriates (Dang and Rammal, 2020), the family instrumental and emotional support influencing positively a cultural adjustment of the expatriate, however, the findings were insignificant in the case of family influence on the work adjustment (Shaffer, et. al, 2016), the factor of being married (Selmer and Laurng, 2011), the well-adjusted family factor (Sarkiunaite and Rocke, 2015; Mäkelä et. al, 2011; Mäkelä and Suutari, 2011; Khedher and Asadullah 2019), the partner taking care of the home businesses and problems (Mäkelä et. al, 2011), support and understanding of the family members (Mäkelä and Suutari, 2011; Davoine, et. al, 2013)

and the partner being already familiar with the host country culture (mostly from coming from the host country or being born in the family coming from a host country) and making it easier and faster for the expatriate to adjust (Froese, 2012). The relationship between family members and the expatriates' adjustment was also in some cases found to be negative. Sarkiunaite and Rocke (2015) stated that there is a positive effect when the family is well adjusted, however, the issues, problems in the family, and the failed adjustment of the family members influence the adjustment of the expatriate negatively. The same findings were presented by Khader and Asadullah (2019) where the family does influence the adjustment of the expatriate when the family members alone adjust well and fast enough but the problems occurring along the way have a negative effect on the expatriates. The partially negative effect was also noted when the family was adjusting to slow to the host country's environment (Bahn, 2015). Two articles either found the impact to be insignificant (Abdul Malek, et. al, 2015) or the research pool didn't give sufficient results and the answer was inconclusive (Takeuchi, et. al, 2007). Summarising this part, most of the publications found the impact of the family members to be positively related to the expatriate adjustment, based on the different factors. In those few cases where the influence was negative, it was based on the negative features coming from the family. The positive impact was noted when the family was well adjusted, didn't have many problems to solve but also were occupied and didn't feel helpless, they were supporting the manager and this could already show, based on the definition of well-being, as well as the cross-over theory, that the better the family members are and feel, the more possible it will be that the expatriate will respond well to the move the host country and adjust fairly fast, which will later influence its work and will raise the possibility of successfully finishing the international assignment.

Furthermore, the direct impact of the family members on the expatriates' success and the success factors were examined. Once more, as the articles focused on the different factors of family influence on the expatriates, there is no single answer to this question. First, this direct impact of different factors on the success of expatriates, international assignment, or the success factors directly connected with the success of the international assignment was mentioned in 18 out of 29 studies in the pool. The influence of the family on the success of the international assignment was in some specific cases positive, in others negative and some studies found it insignificant based

on their sample. 6 articles found the relationship between family and the expatriates' success to be negative, based on: stressed family, family difficulties, family problems, and general unwell-being of the family members influencing negatively the expatriate and the success of the international assignment and family members' inability to adjust influencing the slow or failed adjustment of the expatriates, their performance, their capability to do their job as well as directly influencing the success of the international assignment, for example, by the termination of the assignment and premature comeback to the home country (Van Gorp, et. al, 2017; Bahn, 2015; Cole and Nesbeth, 2014; France, et. al, 2019; Gupta, et. al, 2012; Khedher, Asadullah, 2019). 3 studies found both negative and positive or insignificant influences on the family. The reasons for negative influence statements are the following: family problems, not supportive family, and lack of motivation on the family side for various activities, such as mainly adjustment, but also simply functioning in the host country, motivation to live abroad, to learn the language, to perfect personal skills and to encouraging the expatriates to do their job and the family members influencing the decision of terminating the international assignment (Dang and Rammal, 2020; Sarkiunaite, Rocke, 2015; Shaffer, Harrison, 1998). The same 3 studies also found positive impact with factors such as stability of the family matters and the general well-being of the family, well-adjusted family, family members giving support to the expatriate, and the expatriate family responsibility, which are all the matters that expatriates have to take care of that are related to the functioning of the family, the daily life of them and their loved ones, isn't a direct reason of the failure of the international assignment. Two out of 18 studies that focused on this topic found the relationship to be positive, based on the support of the family positively influencing the performance of the expatriates and the success of the international assignment (Davoine, et. al, 2013; Ramalu, et. al. 2017). The study of Malek (Malek, et. al, 2013) focused more in-depth on the relationship between the spouses and expatriates, thus the relationship was described more in detail. The authors (Malek, et. al, 2013) found a positive influence of the spouse interaction adjustment on the expatriate contextual performance and the contextual performance influencing positively the task performance as well as insignificant findings of the spouse general adjustment impact on the expatriate contextual performance and the spouses' interaction adjustment on the expatriate task performance. Summarising this sentence, the better cross-cultural skills and better adaptability in the country the spouse has, the more it will influence the well-being and well-functioning of the

expatriate (contextual performance) which relates to the improvement of the task performance in the work environment. Another three studies found the impact of the family on the success of expatriates to be partially or marginally positive, based on the spouses' influence on the expatriates' work performance, the adjustment of the family members, and their ability to function in the host country and help each other out, without engaging the expatriate, which results in higher work focus of the expatriate and the family members that experience and show traits of happiness influencing the success of expatriates (Abdul Malek, et. al, 2015; Takeuchi, et. al, 2007; Van Erp, et. al, 2011). Additionally one of the 18 publications found the relationship to be insignificant based on the given sample (Kraimer, et. al, 2001) and one article proved the stabilizing effect of the family on the international assignments, based on the fact, that expatriates who are living with family often cope with stress and strain of work by reaching out to the comforts of home (Tung, 1998).

The results of this part of the study are consistent with the statement of Tung (1998), which includes that most of the literature focused on the topic of successful expatriates and successful international assignments show the negative effect of the family members on the expatriate performance and success. However, the factors aren't specified and the effect is general. Furthermore, this may also show a problem of the family being mostly a driver to failure of an international assignment and can raise a question of how to moderate the general family influence on the assignment or find the best solutions to ensure the family influencing the assignment and expatriate positively. Nevertheless, important to notice is the factor examination and this proves again that the cross-over theory can be applied in this case. Positive feelings and features will positively influence the success of the expatriates. The support coming from the family, the adjustment of the family members in the host country, and their ability to function on a high level in the society, the family members that experience and show traits of happiness are those positive features that define the individuals' well-being and that influence positively the success of the expatriates. The negative factors such as stressed family, family problems and difficulties, family members' inability to adjust, not supportive family due to some other unknown factors, and no motivation on the family side for various activities define the unwell-being and influence the international assignment's success negatively. This proves the consistency with the cross-over theory and can help to give an answer to the main research question, which is the influence of the family members' well-being on the expatriates' success.

With all those four influences already mentioned, which are the influence of the family support on the expatriates, the family members impacting the well-being of the expatriates, the relationship between the family members and the expatriates' adjustment, and the impact of the family members on the expatriate success and the international assignment success it is finally sufficient to analyze the impact of the family members' well-being on the success of expatriates. One important finding which stayed consistent throughout all the studies in the pool is the effect of cross-over and spill-over theories. Whenever the family did not feel well, had experienced problems and issues, didn't adjust, and felt helpless in the host country as well as experienced constant or high stress, they were influencing the expatriate negatively, both on the personal and work level. In this case, the international assignment was at risk and the personal success of the expatriates was unlikely or hard to happen. Yet, the family experiencing happiness, well-being, and well-adjustment, when they could function on a high level in the society and had things to do, which felt important to them and made them occupied, they were able to support the expatriates at home and make sure they will bring the same energy to the work domain. The well-being of family members, based on the literature review of expatriates and their families from different parts of the world executing the international assignments in many different host countries, throughout all the phases of an international assignment, influence positively the success of expatriates. This study, however, showed an important issue which is that the family in literature, is very often and in some cases mostly defined as a hazardous factor in the international assignments, and if not taking into account different factors of the family well-being, the family is seen as a dangerous failure factor in the international assignment success. Another point that arose from this study is the unpredictability of the family members' state of mind and emotions. Mostly the manager is motivated and probably even excited to do the job, move to the new country, and be responsible for the new tasks, the family on the other hand is sometimes dragged, taken away from their previous lives, and told to function well in the new environment. With a lack of motivation and adjustment, the other bad traits come out and a state of unwell-being is observed, which, as said already above, has a negative effect on the success of expatriates. Thus, an important question arises, which is how to influence or ensure the family's well-being state, as it is already proven that the well-being will contribute to the success of the international assignment.

## 6. Implication

This part focuses on the implications of the given findings in the practical and theoretical domain as well as gives an outlook on the further research connected to the topic of this thesis.

### 6.1. Practical implications

The findings of this thesis could be implicated in the business world, in the personal level improvements of the expatriates, and the family relationship building and improvement.

First would be the focus of the international business and international assignment. The findings presented the important impact of the family well-being on the international assignment and also showed a problem occurring in the international assignment, which is the family being very often a factor in the failure of the assignments. Additionally, according to Sarkiunaite and Rocke (2015) as well as Cole and Nesbeth (2014), the companies don't put too much focus and don't give enough support to the family of the expatriates, which could be caused by many different reasons, such as shortage of financial resources, lack of qualified employees, who could support the family or failed assessment of the success factors of international assignment and negligence of the family factor. Cole and Nesbeth (2014) also presented that the organizational support towards the family member is mostly given in the pre-assignment phase, which without a doubt should be a practice of all multinational companies which do the international assignments, however, help and support only in one phase are not sufficient if the company wants to ensure the assignment success. Taking into perspective all the phases of the international assignments, in all of them, the finding of this thesis should be implemented. It means that the selection process should be done with taking into consideration, that the family of the candidate will have an important impact on his/her work, thus the family's perspective and thoughts about the international assignment, such as motivation to leave the home country with the expatriate, should also be included in the process. When the organization already has a perfect candidate to take over the position, with a family that is willing to support them in his/hers new career path, not only the manager but also the family should be given pre-assignment classes, training, or at least get sufficient information about the host country and their life there done by the

organization, so all the family members can prepare to live in the host country and presumably adjust fairly quickly. Luring and Selmer (2010) stated, that the organization may experience positive outcomes in the whole expatriation assignment if families are viewed as a crucial resource from the beginning of selection or recruitment process. However, the support should not end there. As the family experience the culture-shock in the host country, the problems related to the work of the spouse and school for the children, the organization should still be providing help and support for the family members. As consistent with the U-Curve of cross-cultural adjustment (Lysgaard, 1955), the first months of the honeymoon phase should not make the company forget about their expatriates and their families. The adjustment and the well-being of the family member, as well as the expatriates, should be a priority for the headquarters manager responsible for the international assignment if they do want their assignment to continue to be successful. In the retention phase, which means coming back from the host county, the family should also not be forgotten. After becoming comfortable in the host country, the individuals may experience another culture-shock coming back to the home country. To make sure that the expatriate will stay with the same company after the international assignment, the organization should ensure that the family admires the values of the company and feels respected and important. Summarising, the organizations should focus as much on the expatriates as on their families, based on the huge influence the family members have on the expatriate and the international assignment. As also mentioned in the thesis, some of the factors influencing the well-being of the family are more individual, other can be applied to most of the family members, this shows a possibility for the companies to take a more individual approach and make sure their support focuses on the right spot. This would prevent the insignificant and unimportant organizational-financial and time resources allocation and could make sure that the right and sufficient help is given in the place where it is needed. In terms of the support for the family, physical and psychological help should be included. The physical and more visible help would include helping the spouse with finding a job, finding the schools for the children and after-school activities, bureaucracy, the accommodation, and any kind of help needed related to it. The psychological support would mean training and classes, explaining the coulure shock and the best way to adjust, ongoing help with adjustment issues and other issues related to everyday life, psychological help, and providing some kind of social network.



Looking into the practical implications of the findings in the personal lives of the expatriates, first of all, the expatriates should be aware of the impact of their family members on their work. The home domain influences the work domain and their success, thus knowing the importance of their relationship with the family members should also be a topic of some personal conversations. Ensuring the well-being of the family will influence positively the international assignment, thus the expatriate should not neglect his/hers family members, just to be able to put more hours and effort into work. If the expatriates want to ensure the success of their international assignment, they should not only be focused on their work performance, but also the well-being state of their homes. When focusing more on the job will result in worsening their relationship at home, and the overall success would be jeopardized.

The same reasoning can and should be applied in the case of the family members. The awareness of their influence on the international assignment should be known and understood. They also should seek out support from the organization, if one is provided. Overall, the international assignment of the expatriate is the reason for them to be in the host country. Thus the family members should address their problems when needed to ensure their state of well-being which will end up influencing the success of the international assignment and the expatriate.

## 6.2. Theoretical implications and outlook for further research

The thesis aims to increase the understanding of the family in the international assignment context. The world of expatriates in the literature is dominated by the topic of expatriates themselves, not the family (Chen and Shaffer, 2018; Sarkiunaite and Rocke, 2015), which according to this literature review has a huge impact on the success of the international assignment and the individual factors of the expatriates. This shows a gap in the literature on a very important factor and creates opportunities to research the family factor more in detail.

The results of this thesis support the literature on international assignments and show the important relationship between the family and the success of expatriates. The thesis shows a bigger picture of the impact, as it presents how the well-being influences the expatriates positively but also how the family problems, stress, and failed adjustment puts the assignments in danger of failure. That alone creates ideas for further research. A very important topic to study would be at first defining all the factors

of family well-being and unwell-being. What exactly influences the good state of the family and what brings problems and strains. Further research on the factors would also be needed. The knowledge of how to ensure the individuals' well-being, the exact understanding of the factors, and knowing how to influence the factors to play in the assignment's favour would be crucial for the companies and expatriates. Taking into account the fact, that most international assignments fail and the huge costs associated with them put the multinational companies in a place, where they should gather as much theoretical knowledge as possible, to be able to implement solutions that would have a high probability of bringing successful outcomes. Thus further research should bring more information on how to implement specific measures, that directly influence given factors impacting the family. Knowing already that the family is an important factor influencing the expatriates in every phase of the assignment, there should also be further research done, in the focus on the support the family might need in different stages of the international assignment. The support should be given to the expatriates' families, which is already mentioned in the literature review part, but the support coming from the organization should vary based on the needs of the family members, which are going to be different in different stages of the international assignment. Thus further research on the organizational support provided for the family should focus on different phases of the assignment and look for solutions to ensure the family's well-being in all the stages.

The thesis did not focus on the specific parts of the word. This means that the literature review can have theoretical implications on the general topic of expatriates' families, but to be able to create a more detailed perspective, there is a need to specify the cultures. As already shown in the research, the cultural aspect plays a very important role in this topic. It is important for creating the theories, to take a more local approach and in terms of creating the best approach and solutions to be implemented by the companies, the in-depth host-home country perspective should provide more information, which would lead to better-matched solutions, probable higher success level of the international assignment and lower costs, based on excluding the implementation of unnecessary solutions. In some cases there might be a lower need for the family and expatriates for the organizational support, based on the small differences on the cultural level, which means the expatriates and their family members would have fewer problems with adjustments, the family would have a higher

probability of experiencing the well-being state and they would influence the assignment positively. However, sometimes the cultural differences become such big problems for both the family and the expatriates, that it may lead to the assignment failure. Thus the theory should provide more information on the cultural differences and challenges in specific locations, to create the best approaches and solutions to be implemented by the companies.

Another point to research would be the individual traits and more detailed information about the expatriates' family members in the context of well-being and the factors influencing the state of the family. As it wasn't possible to make this contention in this thesis, based on the limited data provided by the given articles in the pool, a great piece of knowledge would be to know how more specific individual factors behave differently in the context of the success of the international assignment. That information would be the time spent abroad and the amount of the assignments already done and how the need for organizational support provided to the expatriates and their families change and if there is a change in the influence of the family on the success of the international assignment. The age also wasn't precisely specified in the pool, thus another point would be a probable change of the findings based on the age of expatriates, spouses, and children. Defining exactly the relationship between family members and knowing the dynamics of the family could also provide important information for the companies and could help with the selection process of the candidates, which are going to have families whose dynamics support the success of the international assignment. Another approach would be focusing not only on spouses, which are covered mostly in the expatriates' family's literature, but also on the children that are not so well studied, and on other family members. There is also a need to specify the influence of the families of the expatriates that decide to accept the international assignment and leave the home country without their families. The impact might be the same as in the general case of this thesis, but it might also provide some additional perspective on how to manage the expatriates better.

## 7. Conclusion

The expatriates' family is an important factor playing a role in the international assignment. According to Cole and Nesbeth (2014), the family doesn't get enough support coming from the organization, and recalling the words of Chen and Shaffer

(2018), the expatriates' families and spouses topic experience significantly less focus in the literature as the case of expatriates. This thesis addresses the influence of the family on the expatriates and the international assignments as well as presents some problems that could have a negative effect on the success of the international assignment. It is relevant to the topic of the expatriates' programs, as the high failure rate of assignment failure is constantly being noted (Andreason, 2003). The literature review, which was conducted with no geographical or cultural limitations, showed that the expatriates' family well-being impacts positively the success of the expatriates but also shows the problems of the family often being the failure factor of the international assignment. This presents a possibility for the organization to improve their processes and put more focus on the family of their manager, as there is a possibility, that the company could positively influence the well-being of the family which would lead to a lower level of international assignment failure. Consistently with the cross-over theory, the expatriates' family members experiencing problems, failed adjustment, unhappiness, and unwell-being would influence the expatriates' state negatively, which then corresponding to the spill-over theory would also enter the expatriate's work domain and influence his/her work negatively. The thesis showed a problem of the family being the hazardous factor but the answer to the main research question regarding the impact of the family members' well-being on the expatriates' success shows a positive side of the family and gives an opportunity for the companies to ensure the higher success rate of their international assignment. The conducted literature review showed an important relationship between the expatriates' families as well as their support and the expatriates' well-being, adjustment in the host country, and performance. Those are the factors that create a successful expatriate and successful international assignment. At this point, the most important knowledge is to identify the factors which influence the family's well-being and find the best possible solutions to manage them in such a way, that the family will at no point and time become a liability and will ensure the success of the expatriates. The literature review presents the importance of the family members' relationships with each other and the need for social support coming from the family in the international business.

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## Master's thesis statement of originality

I hereby confirm that I have written the accompanying thesis myself, without contributions from any sources other than those cited in the text and acknowledgements. This applies also to all graphics, drawings, maps and images included in the thesis.

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Signature:

Zittau, 15.06.2022