

Lund University  
Centre for East and South-East Asian Studies  
Master's Program in Asian Studies  
South Asia Track  
Spring semester, 2010

**CHALLENGES AND ADVANTAGES DURING EXPATRIATION:  
A STUDY ON ASIAN EXPATRIATES IN ISTANBUL**

Author: Özlem Özkan  
Supervisor: Ann Kull

## **Abstract**

Primary purpose of this thesis is to contribute to the currently rather limited academic literature on Asian expatriates in Turkey since this group has recently been growing in number and is expected to grow in the future. The research aims to see commonalities and derive generalizable inferences on advantages and problems of Asian expatriates in Istanbul. 23 semi-structured and mostly personal interviews were carried out with expatriates from some of the present Asian communities (Indian, Chinese, Japanese and South Korean). All answers were categorized on an excel sheet to detect the common points. Research findings were evaluated mainly with the help of patterns and degrees of expatriate adjustment, as well as the factors influencing it. The study presents the challenges as high cost of living, difficult official procedures, language and culture-related challenges, physical and social disturbances, on the one hand. On the other hand, the advantages are high living standards, secular social structure, liberal political atmosphere, cultural similarities and cheap local products. Besides, the study also exhibits the interplay between these challenges and advantages, and expatriate adjustment process.

**Keywords:** Asian expatriate, Istanbul, advantage, challenge, expatriate adjustment.

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## **ACKNOWLEDGEMENT**

My dear family... Thanks for your great patience and support in all ways.

First, I would like to convey my gratitude to Dr. Ann Kull for her guidance and supervision always with the most positive attitude from the beginning of this study. Also, my special thanks to Mr. D.S. Rawat, the Chief Representative of State Bank of India Istanbul Representative Office for being a great manager while working together, supporting me while applying to and continuing this master degree, inspiring me to study on this topic, helping me to reach Indian expatriates and leading me how to reach the others. Finally, I'm thankful to all informants for their valuable time and sharing their experiences, thoughts and feelings sincerely with me.

# 1. INTRODUCTION

## 1.1. Background and the Research Problem

It is a well-known fact that globalized and integrated market relations gave rise to rapid movement of people across borders. The great majority of this movement driven by labor and trade affairs is business people. International facilities of huge enterprises, especially after 1950s, are generally executed and regulated by the overseas presence of their employees (Black 1988: 277). These employees who are generally posted abroad on a temporary basis in order to “fulfill business strategy, develop international human resources and train local staff” (Beaverstock 2002: 531) are called expatriates<sup>1</sup> (Hess and Linderman 2002: xv). According to the definition by Tan, an expatriate is “a highly skilled individual who by his...qualifications is employed by a foreign country or sent by his employers from his home to perform certain specialized functions on a contract of at least six months” (Yeoh and Khoo 1998: 162).

The global market, in line with these recent developments, has become multicultural with partake of Asian businesses and the number of Asian expatriates has naturally flourished all over the world (Bedi 1996: 52). The assertive growth strategies and export-oriented industries of especially China and India pioneered the rise of Asia internationally. Despite it seems like Asia became known or visible due to the commercial activities, in fact various studies about the ancient continent have always been carried out. Actually, what recently happened was that academic works have been intensified and Asia is at the center of global political agenda with the increasing importance of economic activities.

My study can also be regarded a product of this trend as a further explanation, I would like to mention some personal causes leading me to undertake this research. My job in State Bank of India Istanbul Representative Office before taking up Asian Studies master’s program, as well as personal career intentions drew me to study on a topic which combines and includes Turkey and Asia. As the prime mover of the thesis’ topic, the Chief Representative of the above mentioned bank gave me the idea to focus on expatriates. After exchanging ideas and considering Turkey as a fast growing market among expatriate receiving countries from many transnational and multinational corporations<sup>2</sup> - TNCs and

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<sup>1</sup> Hess and Linderman state that "an expatriate, sometimes abbreviated "expat," is anyone who is living outside of his or her home country, either on a permanent or temporary basis." (Hess and Linderman 2002: xv)

<sup>2</sup> According to the definition of International Monetary Fund (IMF), “conglomerates owning subsidiaries or branches in several countries are called multinational or transnational corporations”. (IMF 2000: 23) And for Ghoshal and Bartlett, “a multinational corporation consists of a group of geographically dispersed and goal-disparate organizations that include its headquarters and the different national subsidiaries” (Ghoshal and Bartlett 1990: 603). Jenkins, on the other hand, defines transnational corporations as “all enterprises which control assets

MNCs - (Yavas 2001: 67-68), I thought that it would be suitable to observe advantages and problems related to Asian expatriates in Istanbul.

In this respect, the main issue I dealt with is the socio-economic and cultural advantages and problems encountered by Asian, namely Indian, Japanese, South Korean and Chinese expatriates in Istanbul. The focus of this study is on actors, rather than the system, and how the actor reflects his/her perceptions concerning the system. The system here refers to the new environment, most commonly a host<sup>3</sup> country, but in our case a ‘city’. In light of this, it would be appropriate to evaluate this study as a critique of the system by the actor that enables us to see the shortages and opportunities within the system through the eye of the expatriate. In short, this study presents and analyses experiences of expatriates in Istanbul.

## **1.2. Purpose of the Study and Research Questions**

The primary purpose of this research is to contribute to the currently rather limited academic literature on Asian expatriates in Turkey. Besides, I wanted to see commonalities and derive generalizable inferences on advantages and problems of Asian expatriates in Istanbul. To use the words of Napier and Taylor, this research has sought “to synthesize the common elements of expatriate” Asian “professionals’ experience” (Napier and Taylor 2002: 848).

In addition, this study can be first-hand information for future expatriates from Asia, a group that can be expected to grow. Moreover, it might provide help to an increased self-awareness in Turkey as the host country and to realize short-comings or preparedness of welcoming expatriates in the country.

The main research questions this study attempts to answer are: What are the advantages and challenges encountered by Asian expatriates in Istanbul? Why is working and living in Istanbul advantageous or problematic? The issue of expatriate adjustment and the factors influencing this process are also taken into consideration. Additionally, the impact of these advantages and problems as external factors, as well as individual and to some extent job-related factors on adjustment process, are discussed.

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– factories, mines, sales offices and the like – in two or more countries... Usually...the term is limited to firms that control *production* in at least one foreign country” (Jenkins 1991: 1). As it is common to use MNCs and TNCs interchangeably, referring both, we can say that these are the organizations running operations in more than one country at the same time.

<sup>3</sup> Throughout the study, the concepts like locals, host nationals/society/culture/country/environment refers to Turks, Turkish people/culture, Istanbul or Turkey whereas home culture/country refers to specific Asian cultures/countries.



### **1.3. Methodology**

#### **1.3.1. Research Design**

The strategy pursued in this study is qualitative research. In terms of scope, the research is an exemplifying multiple case study which is also explanatory and descriptive (Yin 2003: 46) since some socio-economical issues are tried to be illuminated. (Bryman 2008: 56) The ambition of the research is to understand the facts or cases with the help of some theories. The results are presented in an inductive approach since one of the research objectives is to be able to draw “generalizable inferences out of observations” (Yin 2003: 11).

Interpretative standpoint has been the guide of this research and ontologically constructivism has been utilized. Throughout the research, along with the researcher, constructionist attitudes of the informants were also brought up in the sense that how they, according to Becker, are “adapting their understandings to the new situation in the light of what is different about it” (Bryman 2008: 20). Regarding reflexivity, as the researcher, I inserted what I had in my mind before doing this research into the text.

#### **1.3.2. Sources of Data**

Primary data was mainly collected through semi-structured and personal or face-to-face interviews which were also “descriptive and specific” as Kvale mentions (Kvale 1996: 30). During the interviews, “open-ended, direct, specifying and follow-up” questions were utilized<sup>4</sup> (Kvale 1996: 133-134). Furthermore, e-mail interviewing, attending a few community gatherings and talking to some researchers or scholars who are informed about Asia related issues or who are in relation with Asian expatriates were also resorted to for gathering the primary data. The secondary data for analysis and validation was gathered by following related “documentation” such as business journals, “reports or progress reports, formal studies, newspaper clippings and other articles appearing in the mass media or in community newsletters” (Yin 2003: 85-86), reviewing previous studies and visiting related websites.

#### **1.3.3. Selection of the Informants**

The main approach in choosing informants was purposive sampling. In this respect, five to six expatriates from four major Asian communities, namely Indian, Chinese, Japanese and South Korean, who work and live in Istanbul, were approached. Due to the small sample

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<sup>4</sup> See interview questions in appendix I.

size compared to Westerners, notably Europeans and Americans, any Asian expatriates were tried to be approached regardless of their being managers or technical staff. For the same reason, European, American or Middle Eastern MNCs or TNCs with Asian staff were also included into the research area to achieve targeted sample size.

According to my initial research plan, I would contact friends and colleagues to access expatriates but that had not been as effective as I thought. Therefore, I tried formal channels and communicated with some associations which were mentioned in my research plan via phone and e-mail and asked help from them to get related contacts. In this respect, one of the first places I visited was Turkish South Korean Friendship Association where I talked to a South Korean teacher giving Korean language courses and speaking Turkish. After telling her about my thesis topic and that I needed to interview with South Korean expatriates, she told that they might not be willing to talk to me since they generally have busy schedules. In addition to that, I called Kotra (South Korea Trade Investment Promotion Agency) from whom I got the reply that their primary goal is to promote Turkish companies in South Korea so being poorly informed about South Korean companies in Istanbul. Nevertheless, the lady whom I talked to was very nice and provided me with the coordinates of four leading South Korean TNC offices based in Istanbul and related South Korean expatriates employed by them.

Apart from those, I visited Japanese Culture and Information Center and asked them whether they have any Japanese employees in their organization or information about Japanese employees of Japanese companies based in Istanbul. However, their reply was negative in the sense that they don't have any Japanese employees (except the workers in Japanese restaurant within the center's building) and much relationship with Japanese companies in Istanbul, though they also do translation work from Japanese to Turkish and Turkish to Japanese. In addition, I sent e-mails to Turkish Japanese Foundation, South Korea trade consultancy and one of the leading China traveling agencies in Istanbul from whom I never received any response.

To summarize, I could not reach most of the expatriates through formal channels and had to utilize snowball sampling. Consequently, first I asked help from my key-informant or door keeper (Creswell 2007: 71), the Chief Representative of State Bank of India Istanbul Representative Office. Through his network reaching Indian informants had been the easiest as I thought.

Moreover, some other surprising and informal channels helped me to reach a number of expatriates, especially while reaching the Japanese and few South Koreans. For example,

my attendance to a beauty day of female Japanese expatriates enabled me to observe the very natural and sincere relations between them and their interactions with me or with other host nationals who were present there at that time. In other words, I used the community relations or social network of each interviewee by kindly asking them to introduce me to their friends. That was the safest, easiest and the most certain way of getting appointments and meeting other informants. To conclude, the most important and effective tool during the interview process in reaching expatriates had been formal or informal networking.

#### **1.3.4. Ethical Considerations**

Since the research topic is not touching upon sensitive issues “that may harm participants or invade their privacy” (Bryman 2004: 509-514), I did not have much concerns regarding ethical considerations. Therefore, as an “overt observer”, before each interview, I informed the interviewees about my researcher identity in order to prevent “lack of informed consent or deception” (Bryman 2004: 511-512, 514). Besides, I asked each interviewee whether they allow me to mention their personal or institutional names within my thesis or not, and in accordance with that I either kept their anonymity or utilized these data. As it can be seen in the later parts and in the references, rather than alias I just put the initials of the informants who didn’t want me to mention their names. For those who didn’t want to reveal their company’s/organization’s names, I generally mentioned the sector and/or the origin of the company/organization.

#### **1.4. Disposition of the Thesis**

So far within this introduction chapter, the research problem and background, purpose of the study, research questions and methodological aspects have been provided. The following chapter 2 reviews previous research as well as discusses theories and concepts used in the present study. In chapter 3, the context of the study is presented such as investments to Turkey, brief summaries of Turkey's relations with China, Japan, South Korea and India. Chapter 4 starts with the description of the informants, continues with the presentation of research findings and provides analysis as well as inferences. Finally, chapter 5 contains the conclusion.

## **2. LITERATURE REVIEW AND THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK**

### **2.1. Previous Research Review**

Looking at the studies done on this topic in Turkey, it is seen that generally adjustment problem of expatriates and the factors affecting it have been taken up from specific perspectives. Yavas, for example, investigated “the dimensionality of expatriate adjustment by using a sample of expatriate managers in Turkey” (Yavas 2001: 62). Besides, in another research done by him and Bodur, the focus was on expatriate managers’ adjustment to some different facets of work and life in Turkey (Bodur and Yavas 1999: 267). Likewise, Wang and Nayir also examined expatriate adjustment in terms of social interaction or “networking” by taking up “some contextual factors, such as geographic proximity and cultural differences between the home country and the host country, influencing adjustment process of European expatriates in China and Turkey” (Nayir and Wang 2006: 449).

Develioglu, similarly, tried to figure out the question of how personal and familial variables are effective on the performance and adaptation of the expatriates at managerial levels by applying “work-family conflict literature” (Develioglu 2002: 167). Apart from them, some scholars concentrated on gender issues in the world of expatriates. Napier and Taylor, for instance, studied experiences of female experts working in Turkey, Japan and China (Napier and Taylor 2002: 837). Sinangil and Ones looked into how gender differences reflect the job performance during expatriation with a sample of 193 expatriates working in Turkey (Sinangil and Ones 2003: 461).

Compared with the aforementioned studies, my study is differentiable in some aspects. Firstly, these works generally (except the studies of Develioglu, as well as Napier and Taylor) utilized quantitative research strategy whereas mine has a qualitative characteristic. Secondly, the research technique used by them is mostly mail-based questionnaires while I collected data through face-to-face interviews like Napier and Taylor did. Besides, my informants are from four major Asian communities located in Istanbul. On the contrary, though above mentioned researchers conducted their studies in Turkey, their samples are not necessarily from Asian communities. Lastly, their study focuses are either on adjustment processes or the variables affecting this process. My study focus, in contrast with that, is on the very specific challenges and advantages encountered by Asian expatriates during expatriation encompassing adjustment process, its stages and variables. Consequently, my research differs from these works in terms of methodology, sampling, location of sampling and the exact focus of study.

## 2.2. Theories and Concepts

Regarding related theories and concepts, international migration, in a very broad sense, is the starting point of this research. Considering the unit of analysis which is the actor, it would be more suitable to think and evaluate this study in the scope of a micro-level international migration theory. For this reason, first human capital theory and the concept of 'rational choice' are briefly discussed below. Then, the expatriate adjustment is taken up in detail.

### 2.2.1. Human Capital Theory

This study can be assessed by utilizing human capital theory which states that "international migration" depends on "such standard components of individual capital as age, gender, education, skill, experience, marital status, as well as on personality features such as ambition to succeed and "entrepreneurial spirit", or a willingness to take risks by changing language, culture, and social environment" (Morawska 2007: 5).

For Freeman, the essential idea of the human capital theory is "that education is an investment of current time and money for future pay" (Oosterbeek 1992: 5). His argument is more meaningful and to the point when one considers any job-related training, workshops, courses and overseas assignments in scope of education. Öberg supports Freeman's statement and further enunciates that "(human capital) will increase for individuals with the length of their education and experience in working life. This process could continue for individuals in most occupations until the age of 45-65. This is the essence of human capital theory" (Oberg 1997: 33).

Regarding the 'experience in working life' in the previous paragraph, overseas postings can be attributed as pivotal in the career path of an individual. The reason for this is believed to be that they enable expatriates to obtain "international knowledge, for example about complexities of global operations, characteristics of national markets, business climate, and cultural patterns" (Selmer 2006: 2003). The experience gained with an international transfer<sup>5</sup>, which can be an international replacement in the same company/organization or from one company to another, is considered significant for self-realization or proving oneself in a different context. In this respect, it can be asserted that though expatriation is seen beneficial and profitable primarily and even solely for the companies or organizations, its

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<sup>5</sup> Transfer is defined by Pinder and Schroeder as follows: "relatively permanent job reassignment that entails the movement of an employee within an organization from one of its operating sites to another" (Pinder and Schroeder 1987: 336-337).

benefits and teachings for individuals can not be disregarded. Meanwhile, the concept of ‘time to proficiency’ which is explained below (see 2.2.3.) should be heeded concerning the fact that the sooner the expatriate adjusts to the new location, the better and more the gains will be for both parties. Actually, there is no real obligatory force behind the relocation of expatriates; rather they might even be given the opportunity to choose where to go for their overseas assignments, human capital theory would therefore be appropriate to comprehend their situation.

### **2.2.2. The Concept of ‘Rational Choice’**

In addition to that, the ‘rational choice’ concept of the neoclassical economic theory (Morawska 2007: 4) might be underlined to the extent that except economic advantages, expatriates can add to their self-improvement and self-confidence by working in a different country and culture. Nevertheless, inspiring and quoting from Napier and Taylor, “Rather than implementing a stringent hypothesis testing study” I would like to pursue “this work as exploratory, seeking to learn more systematically about the” Asian “professionals who work abroad, rather than building or testing theories about them, which” I may “anticipate will come later” (Napier and Taylor 2002: 839). Hereof, theories and concepts mentioned so far were a broad outline to elucidate the linkages between the macros and the study, how the research has been derived and where it can be placed.

Rather than these big theories, more precise and pinpointing approaches extracted from related expatriate literature (international management, careers, international job change, socialization or adjustment literature) are utilized to comprehend the cases, interpret and analyze the findings. In this respect, approaches related to expatriate adjustment are explained in the coming sections.

### **2.2.3. Expatriate Adjustment**

#### *Psychological Adjustment*

Psychological adjustment focuses on the contentment and attitudes of the individual such as lassitude, stress or melancholy (Selmer, 2000: 522-523; Selmer 2002: 73). Selmer referring to Torbiörn et al, Juffer and Oberg states that this term “is based on problem-oriented view focusing on attitudinal factors of the adjustment process” (Selmer, 2000: 522). Besides, Selmer citing from Jun et al emphasizes the deliberate aspect of psychological adjustment which is also independent from situational changes (Selmer, 2000: 523). As the individual is unable or not willing to adapt to the new environment, psychological barriers

occur as a restraining factor in front of adjustment which will be explicated in adjustment expediting and restraining factors part (see 2.4.5.).

#### *Socio-cultural Adjustment*

Originating from cultural learning theory, social behavior and practical social skills, socio-cultural adjustment is the “ability to ‘fit in’ or to negotiate interactive aspects of the host culture as measured by the amount of difficulty experienced in the management of everyday situations” (Selmer 2006: 1996; Selmer 2006: 1211; Selmer 2002: 73; Selmer 2000: 522-523). Regarding socio-cultural adjustment, Selmer states that specific external facts might alter the way of behaving by referring to Jun et al (Selmer 2000: 523). Black, on the other hand, defines three facets of socio-cultural adjustment which are general, interaction and work adjustment (Black 1988: 279; Selmer 2002: 73; Bodur and Yavas 1999: 269).

#### *Time to Proficiency*

For Pinder and Schroeder explicating the concept in detail, time to proficiency is “the length of time that elapses between an individual’s movement into a new job and ascendancy of that individual to a level of performance at which a balance between inducements and contributions exists” (Pinder and Schroeder 1987: 337). Consequently, one can basically say that it is the time spent by the expatriate to achieve the necessary level of productivity and efficiency in the new posting. Despite the term directly connotes with the work adjustment, it also refers to the proficiency in social relations. Concerning this, Pinder and Schroeder places the argument of some other scholars as follows: “proficiency in a job following a transfer” is regarded “as requiring both competence in the official demands of that job and proficiency in its informal, social demands” (Pinder and Schroeder 1987: 337). Here, with this description, time to proficiency shows resemblance to “self-efficacy” and in fact, this aspect of the term is better related to this study as the focus is more on general and interaction adjustments, rather than work adjustment.

Although this study encompasses all above mentioned three adjustment categories, the emphasis is mainly on general and interaction adjustment which are among the sub-categories of socio-cultural adjustment. Moreover, as psychological adjustment is thought to be predominant and influential on all adjustment categories, it has given special importance.

#### **2.2.4. The Degree of Expatriate Adjustment**

Adjustment process during expatriation is an important phase which may either take a few months or last as long as the whole tenure. Bodur and Yavas define adjustment as “a subjective/psychological state” which “refers to the changes which the individuals actively

engender or passively accept in order to achieve or maintain satisfactory states within themselves”. Additionally, they elucidate cross-cultural adjustment as “the degree of psychological adjustment experienced by the individual or the degree of comfort, familiarity, and ease that the individual feels toward the new environment”. Concerning this, they regard expatriate adjustment which is also called “acculturation, adaptation or adaptation and adjustment” in scope of cross-cultural adjustment, as a form of it (Bodur and Yavas 1999: 268). Many scholars developed ideas to describe the adjustment process and two prominent ones, notably Stage Model and the U-curve Approach stand out among them.

### *The Stage Model*

The Stage Model, as Church mentions, is composed of four stages. In the first honeymoon stage, the expatriate with a positive attitude is generally amazed by the new environment. This stage takes a few days up to six months until the expatriate faces everyday reality. The expatriate antagonizes the host culture sensitively while socializes more with other expatriates in the second stage. In the third stage, general and lingual acquaintance of the expatriate regarding the host country, as well as his “sense of humor” increases but implications of arrogance towards the host society are anticipated. In the last stage, adjustment is almost achieved; still with little anxiety, local life style and traditions are admitted and the expatriate is more or less happy with his/her life (Church 1982: 541; Black 1988: 278-279).

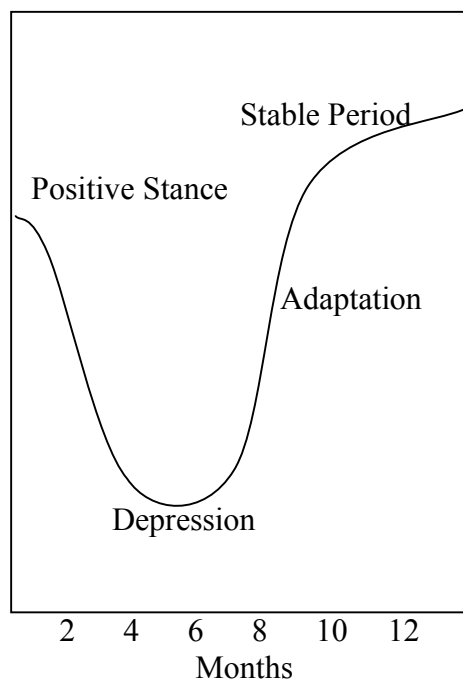
Hofstede names these stages as “Euphoria, Culture Shock, Acculturation, and Stable State” while McEvoy and Parker say “honeymoon, cultural shock, adjustment, and mastery” (Du-Babcock 2000: 40). Church provides a definition and some further explanation of culture shock. He quotes from Oberg saying that “culture shock...as an occupational disease suffered by people who are introduced suddenly to a culture that is very different from their own”. Church, by continuing his quotes from Oberg, states “culture shock is precipitated by the anxiety that results from losing all...familiar signs and symbols of social intercourse...such as customs, gestures, facial expressions, or words”. Citing from Guthrie, he mentions “culture fatigue” which Guthrie uses instead of culture shock with related indicia like melancholy, lack of appetite and sleep, bodily problems, irascibility and uneasiness. Besides, Church also alludes to ‘language shock’ as a primary element of culture shock due to the key importance of language in socialization and ‘role shock’ for defining the status and role vagueness after replacement (Church 1982: 540).



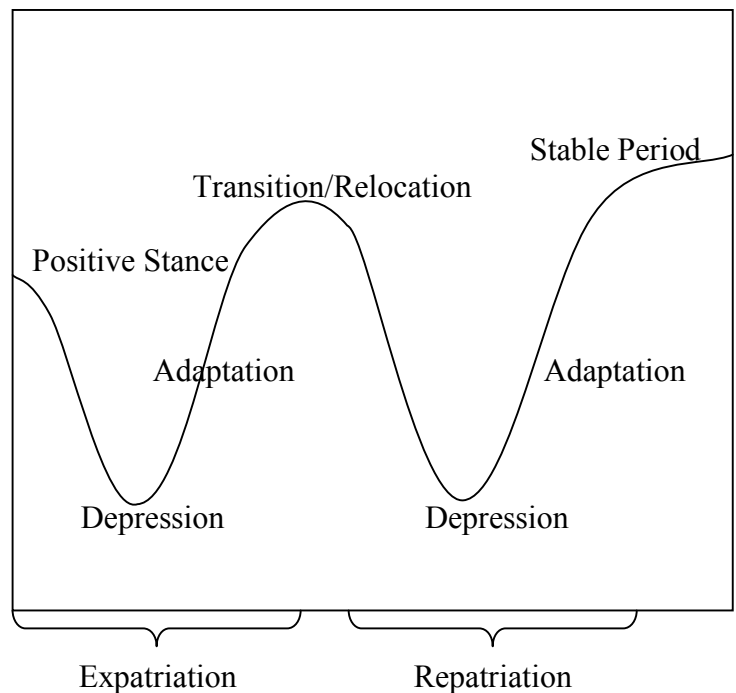
### *The U-curve Approach*

The U-curve is actually regarded as the superior approach to expatriate adjustment by many researchers. Those favoring the U-curve Approach argue that it already includes the Stage Model so they don't mention it separately (Du-Babcock 2000: 40; Black 1988: 278). On the contrary, some scholars like Adler don't distinguish any of these models but take them as the same. With regards to these models, Adler states that "the *U*- and *W*- curve hypotheses reflected the peaks and valleys of adjustment through time" (Adler 1975: 15). Church, on the other hand, describing these two models separately in his work tells the same thing indeed. For him, the first high end of *U* implies early positive stance towards host country; the bottom indicates a depression period whereas the second high end shows step-by-step adaptation and the stable period (Church 1982: 542). The *W*-curve is also not much different from the *U*-shaped approach which can be assumed as two combined *U* curves. In this model, while the first *U* refers to the period in host country, the second *U* shows adjustment process of repatriate taking place in home country (Church 1982: 542).

**Figure 1: The U-Curve Approach**



**Figure 2: The W-Curve Approach**



**Source:** Black and Mendenhall 1991: 227, models slightly modified by the present author.

Eventually, both models aim to define expatriate's emotional or mental condition and the degree of adjustment<sup>6</sup> as “moderate, low, moderate, and then high levels of adjustment” (Du-Babcock 2000: 40). Nevertheless, despite being meaningful and explanatory to some extent, for Du-Babcock, as some environmental effects are not taken into account to explain the adjustment process, these models are imperfect (Du-Babcock 2000: 40-41). Therefore, for better explanation or analysis of the impact of environmental factors and other variables on expatriate adjustment process, scholars mostly rely on the previous research data rather than specific models. Consequently, it can be claimed that these models provide a route for studies done in this field but not an in-depth insight of the cases. In this study also, the degree of adjustment is taken up together with psychological state and external factors.

### 2.2.5. Factors Influencing Expatriate Adjustment

Various factors are believed to affect expatriate adjustment process. These factors are classified as personal/individual, job-related and external factors which can be either facilitating or restraining adaptation. Psychological barriers, a sub-category of personal factors and directly related to psychological adjustment, are explained separately in this part due to their significance.

#### *Adjustment Expediting Factors*

Personal factors which make the adjustment process easier for the expatriate are counted by Black as willingness to adapt, professional adequacy, good communication skills, indulgence for uncertainty, self-esteem, being qualified for the requirements of new posting and “reinforcement substitution” (Black 1988: 280). Job-related factors expediting adjustment, on the other hand, are specified by Black as “the role discretion, previous transfers, and pre-departure knowledge” (Black 1988: 281). Moreover, familial support is seen as one of the most important external factors expediting expatriate adjustment. Certainly, family's level of adjustment plays an important role in this as it is tightly linked to expatriate's adjustment. Besides, interacting with locals also has a positive influence on expatriate adjustment process (Black 1988: 282-283).

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<sup>6</sup> According to Black, “Degree of adjustment can be viewed as both a subjective and objective concept. Subjectively, it is the degree of comfort the incumbent feels in the new role and the degree to which he or she feels adjusted to the role requirements. Objectively, it is the degree to which the person has mastered the role requirements and is able to demonstrate that adjustment via his or her performance” (Black 1988: 278). Although, the term ‘new role’ refers to the new work role, it can be regarded as the new role (social stance) of the expatriate in the new environment (host country).

### *Adjustment Restraining Factors*

According to Black, “role novelty, role ambiguity, role conflict, and role overload” are the job-related adjustment restraining factors (Black 1988: 280). He states that these factors limit the adjustment potential of the expatriate by triggering “uncertainty, unfamiliarity, unpredictability, or uncontrollability” in the new environment (Black 1988: 280). Individual factors restraining adjustment appear as psychological barriers as explained below whereas the external factors differ contextually.

### *Psychological Barriers*

Psychologically constructed cultural barriers are the negative attitudes towards the new environment. It is stated in the literature that cultural barriers equivalent of personal responses are observed when human psychology limits the “*ability or willingness*” (italics reserved) to comprehend, admit and embrace the rules of the new society (Selmer 2004: 796). These new rules that are very different from what exists at home appear very distant and strange to the individual. Cultural barriers become visible when the person reacts against the people, circumstances and the norms of the host culture. Besides, Selmer citing from Torbiörn claims that psychological cultural barriers incline to rise when cultural novelty increases (Selmer 2004: 796).

External factors, among the determinants influencing expatriate adjustment, are the main focus of this study. Along with the individual determinants, the study brings up facilitating and restraining affects of these external factors.

## **3. RELATIONS WITH ASIAN COUNTRIES**

### **3.1. Study Setting: Investments to Turkey – Asian versus International**

“Turkey is growing fast. It’s depending very much on Europe; if Europe is okay, Turkey is growing really very fast and I have seen that in terms of business Turkey is recovering from the crisis very fast because they have seen so many crises, 1994, 2000, 2001. They are experts of the crises... From a geographical point of view, Turkey has the best position in the world.” (A. Mittal 2010, Interview, 10 February)

This opinion of one of my informants is confirmed in academic studies. Turkey has become a regional hub for foreign investors as it is at the crossroads, uniting two main continents with its geographical proximity to Europe, Central Asia, Middle East and North Africa, as well as cultural similarity and lingual commonality (especially with the Middle Eastern and Central Asian countries respectively) (Bodur and Yavas 1999: 267-268). Turkey

has attracted investment aspirations of European and American firms trusting Turkish economy in modern times. This was because of the close relations with the European Union (being a member of the Customs Union and continuing negotiations for EU accession) and also political, as well as military alliance primarily with the United States of America and other NATO (North Atlantic Treaty Organization) members (Bodur and Yavas 1999: 268; Sandikli et al. 2006: 9). Especially after economic liberalization in the 1980s, more and more Westerners targeted the emerging market in Turkey (Sandikli et al. 2006: 39) mainly due to population rise, women's participation into the work life and expanding consumerist urban culture (Bodur and Yavas 1999: 268). On the other side, it is also known that political and economic relations between Turkey and Asia came up comparatively later than the West and intensified especially after 1990s (Sandikli et al. 2006: 9).

The law regarding direct investments to Turkey which was being implemented since 1954 was updated and upgraded in 2003 according to the international standards. This new law paving the way of international investments provided some advantages to foreign investors such as declaration policy instead of licensing for foreign capital inflow, elimination of minimum capital obligation and introducing equal treatment to local and foreign companies (Sandikli et al. 2006: 30). Consequently, today the number of companies with international capital in Turkey is 23.753; 12.870 of those are of EU origin, 1.025 are of US origin and 1.641 are of Asia origin (373 Chinese and 160 South Korean).

In this respect, 13.060 out of 23.753 companies with foreign capital are based in Istanbul and the numbers of established foreign companies on a yearly basis and the number of Asian ones by country are shown in table 1 and 2. Moreover, as also shown in table 3, the dispersion of direct investment entrances according to regions in 2009 is as follows: \$4.604 million from the EU zone, \$560 million from Asia and \$236 million from the USA<sup>7</sup>.

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<sup>7</sup> T.C. Prime Ministry Undersecretariat of Treasury General Directorate of Foreign Investment (2010) *International Direct Investment Information Bulletin*, March 2010, Ankara, p. 9, 10, [http://www.treasury.gov.tr/irj/go/km/docs/documents/Treasury%20Web/Statistics/International%20Direct%20Investment%20Statistics/Bulletin%20and%20Statistics%20After%20Law%20no.%204875/Ocak2010\\_ing.pdf](http://www.treasury.gov.tr/irj/go/km/docs/documents/Treasury%20Web/Statistics/International%20Direct%20Investment%20Statistics/Bulletin%20and%20Statistics%20After%20Law%20no.%204875/Ocak2010_ing.pdf) (accessed 24. March 2010)

**Table 1: Regional Dispersion of Companies with Foreign Capital in numbers**

Regions	1954-2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009
The EU	4.182	1.513	1.926	2.027	1.770	1.390
The USA	453	90	111	127	124	114
Asia	574	159	163	271	229	237
China	191	30	24	41	44	41
South Korea	74	16	13	23	13	21
Others	309	113	126	207	172	175

Source: T.C. Prime Ministry Undersecretariat of Treasury General Directorate of Foreign Investment 2010: 18

**Table 2: Breakdown of Asia Origin Companies and Liaison Offices based in Istanbul**

Countries	China	South Korea	Japan	India
Companies	277	110	88	63
Liaison Offices	13	18	10	3
Total	290	128	98	66

Source: Republic of Turkey Prime Ministry Undersecretariat of Treasury 2009<sup>8</sup>

**Table 3: International Direct Investment Inflow by Regions (million\$)**

Regions	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009
The EU	5.006	14.489	12.601	11.051	4.604
The USA	88	848	4.212	863	236
Asia	1.756	1.927	1.405	2.361	560

Source: T.C. Prime Ministry Undersecretariat of Treasury General Directorate of Foreign Investment 2010: 15

### 3.2. Relations with Some Asian Countries: An Overview

#### 3.2.1. China – Turkey Relations

Diplomatic and direct commercial relations with China established in 1971 and 1965 respectively have recently been intensified (Sandikli et al. 2006: 255, 265). Trade volume between China and Turkey which was US\$100 million in 1985 reached US\$1.636 billion in 2002 and increased gradually as shown in table below (Sandikli et al. 2006: 265). Though the numbers are increasing, as it is an unbalanced increase and China is the advantageous side, Turkish business owners complain about or even protest against this (Isina 2008: 356-357). Consequently, more partnership instead of Chinese made import goods is preferred and expected by Turkish side for the future.

<sup>8</sup> Republic of Turkey Prime Ministry Undersecretariat of Treasury, *List of Companies With Foreign Capital in Turkey - As Of The End of 2009 & List of Liaisons Offices in Turkey – As Of The End Of 2009*, <http://www.hazine.gov.tr/irj/portal/anonymouse?NavigationTarget=navurl://831679608c6ba2da641258f88362f886> (accessed 24. March 2010)

### **3.2.2. Japan – Turkey Relations**

Due to the stagnation in Japanese economy especially after Asian Financial Crisis, it has been observed that Japanese businesses are not as assertive as they were in the 1980s (JETRO 2010: 1, 2). Besides, as Europe is in the secondary place in Japanese foreign trade targets compared to Asia and the US, it has been observed that in the last decade Japan has just tried to preserve its market share in the region but has not been able to extend it like China (JETRO 2010: 4, 14).

Consequently, commercial activities between Turkey and Japan which were generally in the form of direct investment inflows from Japan to Turkey also stagnated during 1990s with an average trade volume of US\$1.275 million from 1991 to 2001 (JETRO 2010: 11). Nevertheless, authorities foresee partnership opportunities on energy issues between two countries. Besides, textile and raw material exports from Turkey to Japan are scaling up and there are more incoming Japanese tourists promoting Turkey back in Japan (Sandikli et al. 2006: 276-277).

### **3.2.3. South Korea – Turkey Relations**

Diplomatic relations between South Korea and Turkey were established in 1957. As a result of Turkish military help to South Korea during Korea War from 1950 to 1953, bilateral relations with South Korea have always been friendly. Besides, cooperation in security industry and military training has been maintained at the supreme level (Sandikli et al. 2006: 335, 337). Today, as also indicated in table 4, the trade volume with South Korea is almost at the same levels with Japan.

### **3.2.4. India – Turkey Relations**

In terms of India – Turkey trade relations, Turkey was the advantageous party until 1980s, though the volume was very little to mention (Sandikli et al. 2006: 323). By 1990s, Indian exports to Turkey have started to increase significantly and continued increasing since then with a small market share (Sandikli et al. 2006: 324). Therefore, analysts state that cooperation in some fields such as construction, information technologies (IT), pharmaceuticals and biotechnology may trigger mutual trade between the countries which is declared to be proceeding below the potential level (Sandikli et al. 2006: 326).

**Table 4: Trade Volumes between Turkey and China, Japan, South Korea and India**

(US\$)	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008
<b>China</b>	4.867.662.000	7.435.164.000	10.362.148.000	14.273.615.000	17.079.977.000
<b>Japan</b>	2.874.404.000	3.343.445.000	3.479.809.000	3.950.352.000	4.352.336.000
<b>South Korea</b>	2.651.761.000	3.585.159.000	3.712.235.000	4.522.213.000	4.361.133.000
<b>India</b>	1.179.732.000	1.500.342.000	1.801.647.000	2.647.961.000	3.000.328.000

Source: T.C. Başbakanlık Dış Ticaret Müsteşarlığı<sup>9</sup>

To conclude, it can be claimed that Turkey's economic relations with Asia which eventually leads social and political relations are developing multi-directionally at a moderate level. Any joint ventures signed with an Asian partner or any new branches or liaison offices established by Asian companies cause an inflow of expatriates and socio-cultural interactions both at personal and communal levels. This development points to the importance of studies like this present one.

#### 4. EXPERIENCES OF ASIAN EXPATRIATES IN ISTANBUL

##### 4.1. Sample Profile

Although preparations for interview process started in the second half of January, the first interview could not take place until February 2, 2010. After completing the last one on March 4, 2010, the targeted sample size was reached with plus 3. The total number of 23 interviewees composed of 7 Indians, 7 Japanese, 5 South Koreans and 4 Chinese (including 1 Tibetan). Except 2 interviews done through e-mail, 21 informants were interviewed personally. Within these 21 face-to-face interviews, 2 expatriate wives were interviewed on behalf of their husband as the expatriates themselves were very busy. In terms of gender, surprisingly 6 (26%) out of 23 interviewees were females and all were Japanese whereas the rest 17 (74%) were males.

Regarding age composition of the informants, the average was 36,7 ranging between 24 and 59. In this respect, the youngest female expatriate was 29 years old while the eldest was 36. On the contrary, the youngest male expatriate was a 24 year-old Japanese language trainee whereas the oldest was a 59 year-old Chinese managing director. Consequently, the Japanese are the youngest expatriates with a mean age of 31,1 and the Chinese are the eldest

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<sup>9</sup> T.C. Başbakanlık Dış Ticaret Müsteşarlığı, "İkili ve Çok Taraflı İlişkiler: Asya – Avustralya Bölgesi Çin, Japonya, Güney Kore, Hindistan Ülke Raporları", <http://www.dtm.gov.tr/dtmweb/index.cfm?action=detay&yayinID=118&icerikID=216&dil=TR> (accessed March 2010)

with 44 whereas South Koreans and Indians are between them with 35,5 and 39,2 averages, respectively.

#### 4.1.1 A Detailed Portrait of the Informants

Looking at the marital status of expatriates, it is seen that the number of married expatriates is 14 (60,8%) and single is 7 (30,4%) whereas 2 expatriates (8,6%) are divorced. 1 Japanese lady is married to a Turkish gentleman whereas 2 other Japanese ladies are in relationship with Turkish gentlemen. Apart from this, all married expatriates and their spouses have the same nationalities with an exception of a South Korean gentleman who is married to a Turkish lady. Therefore, it can be stated that 4 interviewees (17,3%) are in a familial relationship with someone Turkish.

The number of expatriates living alone is 4 (3 Japanese and 1 South Korean) whereas 15 expatriates live with their families, 2 with flat mates and 2 with colleagues. 12 expatriates living with their families explicitly state that they need close family support especially when they are abroad, on the one hand. On the other hand, 6 expatriates imply that they need the support of somebody, a boyfriend, a colleague or a flat mate for psychological or economic reasons like eliminating the feeling of loneliness or sharing the expenses during their stay here. Parallel to this regarding familial issues, it was observed that 6 out of 11 expatriates having children have 1 child while 5 of them have 2 children. Though all expatriates having children live with their families, one divorced expatriate had to send his children back to South Korea due to expensive school fees of English medium schools. Generally, companies or institutions support expatriates who take their families with them. However, some of the companies or organizations do not cover all expenses but the main ones such as accommodation (including electricity, water and gas bills) and transportation.

In terms of educational backgrounds and the sectors expatriates are employed, we see that all Chinese expatriates are employed in the sectors they studied on. On the contrary, 6 Indians, 3 Japanese and 2 South Koreans are dealing with the professions parallel to their studies at different departments and with different titles. Neither Chinese nor South Korean expatriates interviewed with hold a master degree while 6 Indians and 2 Japanese have master degrees. In connection with this, it was seen that all Indian interviewees are at managerial positions while 1 expatriate from Japan, 2 Chinese and 4 South Korean expatriates are at the managerial levels.

With regards to the lingual ability of the interviewees, the observation was that all 7 Japanese expatriates could speak the host language, notably Turkish. As a result, Japanese



expatriates spoke in Turkish throughout interviews both to practice their language skills and because some of them were not fluent in English. Indians were just one step behind of the Japanese with a number of 4 Turkish speaking expatriates out of 7 interviewees (57%). However, unlike Japanese, all Turkish speaking Indians preferred talking in English during interviews. Other than this, South Koreans can be sequenced the third with 2 Turkish speaking expatriates out of 5 interviewees (40%). Nevertheless, Chinese had been the last in terms of lingual ability since none of the interviewed Chinese expatriates could speak Turkish. In total, 13 out of 23 expatriates (56,5%) from all nationalities can speak the host language which, I guess, is a high number or more than I expected.

Regarding companies they work for, the findings are as follows: all Japanese expatriates are employed in Japanese firms/institutions whereas 3 Chinese (74%), 5 Indian (71,4%) and 3 South Korean (60%) expatriates are employed in India, China or South Korea originated companies/institutions respectively. The rest is employed either in Turkey originated TNCs or some other MNCs.

## **4.2. Research Findings**

Below follow the research findings presented as challenges and advantages respectively. In the challenges part, we see that physical or material facts are identified as significant, some of a more common art others more specific. In the advantages part, social and cultural aspects are more noticeable.

### **4.2.1. Common Challenges**

“If you have a good mood, if you know the people and the language, every metropolitan is more or less the same. Life is difficult and costly. But when you are professional these things are very negligible so I don’t see a big difference between Delhi and Istanbul except the language.” (R. Puri 2010, Interview, 25 February)

#### *Life is Expensive and Stressful in Big Cities: Education, Cost of Living and Traffic*

One of the first things to be mentioned regarding challenges is the high cost of living in a big city like Istanbul. Despite cheap textile and food prices which is mentioned within advantages, some expenses such as heating gas, oil, water, electricity, rent and imported goods are expensive. To exemplify, Ms Yajima states that monthly bills for these expenses in Istanbul are as high as in Japan (M. Yajima 2010, Interview, 11 February). Likewise, Mr. Rawat and Mr. Guohua points out high costs by saying “The cost of living is higher than

India” and “...the expenditure is higher than China”, respectively (D.S. Rawat 2010, Interview, 17 February and G. Guohua 2010, Interview, 2 March). Ms. Shiina talking about imported products says that “As there is too much tax on imported goods, a very cheap product in the country of origin becomes very expensive in Turkey. Besides, varieties of imported food items are very less compared to Japan.”<sup>10</sup> (S. Shiina 2010, Interview, 14 February).

In addition to that, expensive school and daycare center fees, as well as few options for the schooling of foreign students (generally children of expatriates) are other challenges. For example, the organization Mr. Oh (South Korean) works for is not covering the school fees of his children. Therefore, he informs that new-comers if they are married, especially those with children should not come or bring their families with them due to the expenses such as school fees. He says so because he brought his children when he first came but after seeing expensive school fees of English medium schools, he had to send his children back (S.C. Oh 2010, Interview, 20 February). Similarly, one of my Indian informants who doesn't want me to reveal his name on this issue is bothered with paying huge amounts of school fees. As he didn't have children when he took the posting, he did not also negotiate with the company for schooling. However, now the schooling of his children is a great pressure on him both because there are not many English medium schools and whatever available is very costly.

Connectedly, thinking education broader to cover the hobby classes also, Mrs. Lee complains that education is problematic here because a lot of money needs to be paid for university preparation, piano, art, tennis or swimming classes. She says that these kinds of hobby lessons are very common in South Korea and as everybody is interested in these, the prices are reasonable but here very expensive (S. Lee 2010, Interview, 26 February).

Another problematic issue asserted by South Koreans and Japanese rather than Chinese and Indians is the traffic jam and driving in Istanbul which they find very difficult due to uproar, disorganized lanes and lack of proper signalization. Mrs. Tsuchiya states that she had a car back in Japan and was able to drive comfortably but here she does not have one and does not want to drive in Istanbul traffic as she hates traffic (Y. Tsuchiya 2010, Interview, 2 February). Mrs. W. (South Korean) also tells that she cannot drive here as she is really scared due to insufficient traffic lights or warnings. One of the first shocking events for them was when they saw people rushing to the road in the middle of traffic without checking the

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<sup>10</sup> In fact, Istanbul is the leader among the few cities in Turkey where a great variety of imported goods and food items can be found.

lights (D. W. 2010, Interview, 4 March). Similarly, Mr. G. (South Korean) defines violations of traffic rules as “lack of common sense” and ironically says that “I can stop my car anywhere even in the middle of the road. It is good and convenient. No speed limit, no traffic rule, very comfortable.” (Y. G. 2010, Interview, 12 February).

#### *Challenges Regarding Official Procedures*

The primary challenge regarding formal procedures that expatriates face and complain about is lengthy processes of obtaining work and residence permit. For instance, Mr. Wang mentions how long he needed to wait to receive his residence and work permit. Besides, he makes a comparison between China and Turkey regarding this, and says that Chinese authorities take immediate steps to issue visa or residence and work permits (S. Wang 2010, Interview, 10 February).

Mr. Mittal, concerning the same issue, tells his worrisome experience as “I have been sent from airport back to India. I have not been taken inside to Turkey and I had to go back to India and it was really surprising for me. Even that I was having valid visas. And it is faced by most of the people; okay not in terms of what I faced but they face visa problems all Indians.” When I asked the reason, he continues as follows: “I was having a work visa and it was expired on 30 December, I believe. As you know, by law we can apply only 45 days before to get the extension. We applied on time; before my visa got expired I applied. But Turkish system takes 4-5 months to get extension. So after 30 December I was illegal in Turkey, my visa was in process to be extended and I was in Turkey. Then, we were having a group meeting in India so I had to go back to India on January 21. And my agent said ‘You can go back; you go to airport, they will penalty something and then you go to India, take a new business visa, show your fine that your visa is under process of extension so they will allow you, they will say nothing’. Maybe this is wrong information maybe, I don’t know. I went to airport and they put me a stamp, not on my passport they gave me a paper saying that I cannot come back to Turkey for 3 months. I said ‘Look, my family is here and I have applied for the extension, I did not get the extension yet’. They are saying ‘It is under process and it will take more time’, but I had to go back to India because of my meeting and I will come back in 7 days. They said ‘No!’ this and that. Then, airport officer said ‘Okay, go to India, take a visa and come back’, and they sent me and I was out already, immigrated me. So I went to India, I applied for a visa, and they issued me a visa, a business visa for one month or something. So I thought okay in one month I can get my work visa. Then I came here after 10 days I think, 3 or 4 February. And they said ‘You are not valid to come to Turkey because you are banned in system, banned for 3 months.’ I said ‘I have work permission application over there, it is for

extension and this is my visa, a valid visa.’ They said, ‘Okay, we can take you in if you withdraw your work permit application because in Turkish law, one cannot have two visas at the same time, so if you want to come in, then we will reject your extension of work permit and then you can come or you have to go back to India and when you get the extension, you can come here. If you don’t get the extension for 3 months, you have to stay in India for 3 months.’ I cannot withdraw my work permit extension because business visa was for only one month and if I withdraw the application then I have to apply again and it may take 6 months. So then they forced me to go back to India. I said them okay, that time I was having valid visas for UK also, Poland also. I asked them to send me to Poland or UK but they didn’t allow me. I had to go back to India that night. 3 months my family was alone and I was in India. So it was a painful time. 3 months, I didn’t get the extension and then my penalty finished and I came.” (A. Mittal 2010, Interview, 10 February).

Another Indian expatriate experienced an incident like this due to visa procedures. As a result of the lack of communication between institutions, and due to the knowledge gap within these official bodies, the expatriate and his spouse were given hard time and were treated like criminals though they were not at fault (K. Raman 2010, Interview, 23 February). Here, I am unable to provide the actual story and the details since my informant did not want me to quote his talk. However, I can say that what they experienced was really unfortunate and they expect more anticipation from government officials, as well as police officers at the customs in such cases.

Similar to obtaining residence and work permits, complicated regulations or bureaucratic issues of opening bank account or getting residence certificate are also bothering expatriates most of the time. Mr. Oh states that administration system or police station is very slow and complicated. He gives the example that if he needs to open a bank account, residence certificate is required and to obtain residence certificate, authorities ask a bank account. Therefore, he says “It is an irony. How can I solve this problem?” (S.C. Oh 2010, Interview, 20 February). In fact, neither opening a bank account nor obtaining a residence certificate is not time consuming or very complicated for the locals. Nevertheless, most probably different laws and regulations for foreigners and language barrier caused difficulty for Mr. Oh.

Apart from these, problems related to insurance, especially in health issues are other points reflected by the expatriates. Since state granted social insurances of foreign nationals are not valid in Turkey, expatriates mostly visit private clinics which are very expensive. Besides, they have difficulty in finding English speaking doctors, health personnel or

comprehensive English websites. Hence, they face difficulties in specific cases such as telephone consultation before hospital visits or finding the right specialist for very particular problems. Mrs. Tsuchiya, concerning this issue, told the case when she needed to take her daughter to the nearest hospital late at night because of high fever. Then she had to pay huge amount of money as her insurance was not valid in Turkey, as well as extra emergency night charge (Y. Tsuchiya 2010, Interview, 2 February).

#### *Language-related Challenges*

Except my Japanese informants (they all speak Turkish), low level of English speaking population is a very common point underlined by many expatriates. As a result, communicating with local people in suburbs of Istanbul, as well as interiors of Turkey sometimes becomes very difficult in daily life; for example at restaurants, in taxis and shopping in bazaars. Also, non-Turkish speaking expatriates state that they face difficulty in a post office or while calling customer services of telecommunication authorities to fix internet or landline problems due to any or very few English speaking staff. Mr. Namana (Indian) voices that “The only problem Istanbul has is language as far as I feel. And if the other person is kind enough, he will bear me and try to be patient in understanding. Otherwise, it creates problems.” (V. Namana 2010, Interview, 17 February). Regarding the same issue, Mr. Mittal says “I feel that English education standards are really poor in Turkey. Something must be done for this on an immediate basis. English culture is not so popular; okay, we should not leave our own language, but English is the international language. So we should respect this as an international language.” (A. Mittal 2010, Interview, 10 February). Additionally, I observed that some expatriates obliged to learn the local language because of job requirements. To exemplify, Mr. Joshi (Indian) and Mr. Raman learnt Turkish as a result of their interaction with Anatolian customers based in cities like Sanliurfa, Gaziantep or Kahramanmaras who cannot speak English (P. Joshi 2010, Interview, 24 February and K. Raman 2010, Interview, 23 February). In some other way, Mr. Takahashi (Japanese) tells that how he was cheated by locals when he could not speak Turkish at all at the beginning of his stay. However, after becoming fluent in the local language, he realized that those people were unable to cheat him anymore (G. Takahashi 2010, Interview, 24 February).

In connection with that, expatriates also bemoan about no local English broadcasting or few options in printed materials in English such as magazines, books or newspapers except at some specific stores. Mr. Liurong (Chinese) wishes that the environment could be friendlier for foreigners such as having English broadcasting, more printed materials in English or more English speaking people (D. Liurong 2010, Interview, 2 March). It is true that there is not a

local TV channel broadcasting in English for 24 hours a day but the official state channel broadcasts midnight news in English shortly. Besides, since international channels can be watched via satellite or cable TV, I guess this can be counted as a minor problem.

#### *Physical and Social Disturbances*

Lack of well-built infrastructure, insufficient city planning and problematic public services such as means of transportation or postal services are among physical disturbances mentioned by expatriates. Especially Japanese and South Koreans criticize this whereas Indian expatriates generally praise it. Mr. Wang thinks that although the city is full of natural resources, unfortunately there is no city planning compared to his hometown Nanjing (S. Wang 2010, Interview, 10 February). Likewise, Mr. Liurong tells that he doesn't like unplanned buildings or construction facilities and continues as "There is no planning in Istanbul and if there had been city planning, Istanbul would be a much better place to live in." (D. Liurong 2010, Interview, 2 March). Ms. Shiina, beside the lack of infrastructure, also dislikes delays in subways or buses and thinks that subways are not sufficient (S. Shiina 2010, Interview, 14 February). Mr. G., on the other side, had a bad experience with Turkish postal services. He recalls this by saying "I received my parcels after 6 months argument" and he speaks out his anger towards PTT<sup>11</sup> (Y. G. 2010, Interview, 12 February).

On the contrary, Mr. Rawat finds Istanbul better than any other big cities in India such as Mumbai, Chennai or New Delhi, in terms of infrastructure. As he comes from a small town compared to Istanbul, looking at roads, network, the availability of electricity and drinking water, he thinks that he is in a much better place (D.S. Rawat 2010, Interview, 17 February). Similarly, Mr. Joshi also states that in terms of infrastructure, Istanbul is much better than what they have in India (P. Joshi 2010, Interview, 24 February). Mr. Namana, meanwhile, takes attention to the decorative items in the city. He thinks that people are more concerned with outside beauty here; the houses are more well-done, decorated. He gives the example of electricity transformers on the streets, in Istanbul they are covered and painted so they look beautiful (V. Namana 2010, Interview, 17 February).

Furthermore, beggars and thieves are among the social disturbance elements which threaten foreigners, as well as the locals. To exemplify, Mrs. Tsuchiya had a bad experience of purse-snatching once when she had been to a street bazaar. She tells that before shopping, she needed to withdraw some money from an ATM machine, and then realized that some guys were following her. After shopping, one of those guys tried to steal her purse but luckily

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<sup>11</sup> PTT (Post, Telegraph and Telephone): General Directorate of Turkish Post.

he could not. She says she was very scared after this event which affected her psychology negatively. For the same reason, she finds beggars disturbing and distrustful (Y. Tsuchiya 2010, Interview, 2 February). Ms. Ishigaki (Japanese) also had a bad experience as such. Unconsciously, she left her bag at the back of her seat and a thief tried to steal it in Kasimpasa district. Luckily, her friend saw the thief and could catch him before he runs away (M. Ishigaki 2010, Interview, 20 February).

In terms of this issue, Mr. Liurong says that he and some of his colleagues reside in Sisli area and he doesn't find this area safe enough because their house was broken in twice so far and lots of things were stolen. Now, they are looking for an apartment with security guards (D. Liurong 2010, Interview, 2 March). As a comment, I can affirm that Sisli area is comparatively safer. Most probably, this is more than a simple theft by a single burglar, rather might be organized crime by some groups who follow foreigners and know that they are well-paid business people. Otherwise, breaking in the same house twice cannot be a coincidence. Mr. Takahashi, on the other side, talks about some cunning taxi drivers who try to cheat foreigners. He says that they follow remote routes, don't open taximeters, ask more than the actual price or don't give back change (G. Takahashi 2010, Interview, 24 February). Mrs. W. as well highlights the same point by saying "some shop-keepers or taxi drivers don't give changes back." (D. W. 2010, Interview, 4 March).

### *Cultural Challenges*

Another common complaint is the unavailability of some very particular food items or raw materials to cook. For instance, while Indians such as Mr. Namana, Mr. Mittal and Mr. Puri complain that different lentil types, junk Indian food or snacks are not available, Chinese (like Mr. Wang) and Japanese (like Mr. Takahashi) are bothered with not finding pork here. However, some expatriates like Mr. Rawat also know the logical reason for that which is comparatively small presence of Asians in Istanbul (D.S. Rawat 2010, Interview, 17 February). Therefore, even if these goods are brought into the city/country, they will be very expensive due to high shipment costs and taxes. Besides, as there will not be much demand, they will most probably get spoiled before being consumed. In this respect, Mr. Oh states that in other metropolises there are Korean food shops but in Istanbul there is not. He also informs that the customs process is very difficult and maybe that's why Korean food items are not brought to Turkey. However, he heralds that somebody will open a Korean food shop in Istanbul soon (S.C. Oh 2010, Interview, 20 February).

Finally, as an interesting challenge, unavailability of entertainment activities of home country is raised by some expatriates. For instance, Mr. Takahashi complains that there are

only discos and bars but karaoke bars are not available or whatever available as karaoke bars is very different than the ones in Japan (G. Takahashi 2010, Interview, 24 February). Similarly, Mr. Guohua says that karaoke is very popular in China but not here. Also, in China they have some special tea houses where many different varieties of tea is available, but here he says there is only coffee (G. Guohua 2010, Interview, 2 March). Regarding the former, I can say that karaoke is an imported entertainment facility adapted to the local culture so it would not be wise to expect it to be the same as in the original Japanese or Chinese culture. Regarding latter, it can be stated that Turkish tea and coffee culture is actually very traditional and broad; there are cafés in every popular street. Locals usually drink brewed black tea rather than consuming flavored or green teabags and Turkish coffee is still the most favorite in the country. However, since chain coffee shop are nowadays very fashionable in Turkey like in other countries, locals prefer having coffee when they go out but in their houses they mostly consume tea especially along with breakfast, after lunch and dinner. Consequently, here Mr. Guohua complains about the unavailability of tea houses serving different varieties of green and other tea kinds like in China. If he was living with some Turks or interacting with them more intimately, he would realize that locals generally have coffee outside which is different than the classical black tea being consumed inside houses almost any time of the day.

Likewise, Ms. Shiina also specifies a difference as there are lots of zoos, aquariums, amusement parks, open and closed parks to visit in Japan but this variety is not present here (S. Shiina 2010, Interview, 14 February). I agree that zoos, aquariums and amusement parks are not sufficient in number but these are available in Istanbul and there is a number of parks at the city center, forestry areas in the outskirts and seaside walking or running paths. However, most probably, these places are not that technological as in Japan so they are not that charming for Ms. Shiina, although they are attractive for some other Japanese expatriates so we see how perceptions differ even among the same nationals (see p. 33). Additionally, Mr. Puri sometimes wants to go and watch Bollywood movies at movie halls, but they are not available in the theaters here which he thinks is very unfortunate (R. Puri 2010, Interview, 25 February). This is also related to the individual standpoint without considering the influential factors. Bollywood movies might be enjoyable to watch but as locals prefer the mainstream and since there is not a big Indian community, movie halls don't show them. Still, I come across some culture and art associations organizing special nights or days to introduce and promote Bollywood.

Above mentioned challenges can be grouped as follows: Challenges that might be encountered in other cosmopolitans and challenges specific to the city/country but might also



be encountered in other developing countries. In this respect, high cost of living, expensive schooling and hobby classes, as well as traffic situation can probably be faced in other cosmopolitans. On the contrary, problems regarding formal processes and culture-related challenges might be specific to the city/country whereas lingual challenges, as well as physical and social disturbances might also be encountered in other developing countries. Throughout the interviews, I noticed that the challenges which are also common for other cosmopolitans are tolerated to some extent by most of the expatriates. However, I also observed that expatriates put more emphasis on the latter groups of challenges. Regarding this, Birdseye and Hill note that “Developing countries in particular seem to be problematic...expatriates in the Middle East...and parts of Asia were considerably dissatisfied with their postings.” (Birdseye and Hill 1995: 792). Nevertheless, rather than discussing expatriate satisfaction, the study tries to assess the impact of these challenges on adjustment process and it is seen that they have an impact on this process (see 4.3.).

#### **4.2.2. Advantageous Sides**

##### *Living in a Posh Neighborhood*

As a big city, Istanbul provides high living standards and plenty of leisure time activities to its inhabitants. Expatriates usually find the living standards in Istanbul as high as in Europe; they even assert that in some central parts, these standards surpass some European metropolitans. Concerning this, Mrs. Takhan (Chinese) says that here the living standards are like in Europe in terms of food, clothing, shops, imported items with the exception of income disparity. Despite unfair distribution of wealth, she mentions that “Even common people are well-dressed. In other words, one can live well with reasonable stuff here so it is a mixed variability of options.” (T. Takhan 2010, Interview, 3 March). Mr. Mittal, on the other side, who comes from a small Indian city defines the life in here very fast. He likens his move to Istanbul to moving from a small hometown to Mumbai or Delhi. However, in terms of population or population density, he finds the life in Istanbul better than in Mumbai or Delhi and adds that “We have more space to live; I mean we have bigger houses. It is better...the quality of life is definitely better than earlier.” (A. Mittal 2010, Interview, 10 February). Likewise, Ms. Ishigaki, Mr. Takahashi and Mr. Lee are also bored of living in small flats in Japan and South Korea. They all agree on that their life standards have improved as they have shifted from smaller flats with high rents to bigger apartments with reasonable prices (M. Ishigaki 2010, Interview, 20 February; G. Takahashi 2010, Interview, 24 February and S. Lee 2010, Interview, 26 February).

Additionally, expatriates are able to find several leisure time activities in Istanbul, too without being the same as in their home counties as complained in challenges part. Mr. Rawat thinks there are plenty of clubs to join, lots of entertainment activities and many places to visit (D.S. Rawat 2010, Interview, 17 February). Similarly, Ms. Yajima pointing out the historical richness of the city implies abundance of sightseeing activities (M. Yajima 2010, Interview, 11 February). Ms. Ishigaki finding entertainment facilities in Istanbul very different regrets that she hadn't lived and entertained like this when she was younger (M. Ishigaki 2010, Interview, 20 February).

#### *Advantages Related to Political and Social Structure*

Most of Asian expatriates, especially those who have been to Middle East, and who didn't know much about Turkey before coming here, are surprised with the general atmosphere in the country with regards to politics, social issues and culture. As 99% of Turkish population is composed of Muslims and as it is geographically close to other Muslim countries directed with Islamic law, the prejudice of these expatriates was that Turkey is indifferent from Arabic countries in the Middle East. However, especially in religious terms, unlike Middle Eastern countries and the Gulf States, Turkey has a secular social structure, and this liberal atmosphere is more visible in Istanbul. Consequently, in the interviews, all informants without exception stated that they feel comfortable among locals and practice their religion freely without feeling any pressure or negative sights from the host society.

Regarding this, Mrs. W. says "Physical appearance is quite different from Iran or other Islamic countries." (D. W. 2010, Interview, 4 March). For Mr. Liurong "Istanbul is open, religion is not so important. You can have your own religion, you can have different religion; it doesn't matter, not like the Middle East countries." (D. Liurong 2010, Interview, 2 March). Mrs. Lee also found the atmosphere liberal than she expected because she was expecting all women wearing headscarf but saw that this is not the case. Nevertheless, she observes that in some specific districts such as Eyup, the atmosphere is more conservative (S. Lee 2010, Interview, 26 February). Ms. Ishikawa (Japanese) supporting Mrs. Lee's observation argues that the atmosphere changes from place to place or person to person, for example while Fatih district is more conservative, Sisli is more liberal (S. Ishikawa 2010, Interview, 18 February).

Moreover, some expatriates know more about this issue as they interrogate it further by following the news, asking questions to locals or just as a result of their experiences. Mr. Mittal, for instance, stayed in a southern Anatolian city named Kahramanmaraş when he first moved to Turkey. Based on his experience, he states that Istanbul is liberal like Europe but the atmosphere is more conservative in interiors of Turkey (A. Mittal 2010, Interview, 10

February). Likewise, Mr. Namana thinks that the society seems very liberal when looking at women but argues that Turkish men are more bothered with religion than women. He says generally men go to mosques or Friday worshipping and mostly men direct religion related questions to him. Besides, as Mr. Namana reads English version of a rightist newspaper, he witnesses that many editorials are about Islam, being Muslim or headscarf issue which is not very comforting for him. However, he says that he has never been bothered with such issues in his daily life (V. Namana 2010, Interview, 17 February).

#### *Cultural Resemblances as Advantages*

Another important point attracting the attention of expatriates is cultural similarities between home and host cultures. Turkey has a tolerance in welcoming distant cultures as “elements of both Eastern and Western values with modernity, traditionalism, and Islamic values” exist “side by side at all layers of society and organizations” (Bodur and Yavas 1999: 268). Turkish people’s looking European from outside but being Asian from inside with characteristics such as being warm-blooded and behaving friendly, sincerely or somehow informally also makes expatriates feel themselves less distinct from the locals. Actually, although these features are shared by most of the Mediterranean countries like Greece, Italy or Spain, Turkey differs from them in terms of religion, relatively conservative social structure/norms and also due to the historical ties with Asian continent. In this respect, cultural resemblances such as respect for elders, close family ties or bringing up and supporting children make Asian expatriates feel more comfortable and help them to eliminate the feeling of exclusion.

Regarding this, interviews show that all informants find host nationals welcoming with little disturbance raised by Japanese ladies due to intense interest of Turkish men towards them. Besides, informants define the local culture as a trans-culture or fusion between Europe and Asia, in the middle of or in between the European and Asian cultures, a mixture or a combination of the East and the West and within or closer to Asian culture. Among all, three expatriates either explicitly stated or implied that the host culture is unique. Underlying common point for all these definitions is that Asian expatriates find Turkish culture and especially the cultural environment in Istanbul close to their home cultures one way or the other. Certainly, the culture is unique but according to individual perceptions its being close or distant from home culture differs.

For example, Mrs. Tsuchiya specifies taking off shoes and the habit of drinking tea<sup>12</sup> which is common between Turkish and Japanese cultures (Y. Tsuchiya 2010, Interview, 2 February). Likewise, Mr. Oh emphasizes the kinship relations which are very important in South Korea as in Turkish culture (S.C. Oh 2010, Interview, 20 February). Mr. Raman also highlights the importance of family ties in Indian culture, as well as the children for the families which is very similar to Turkish culture (K. Raman 2010, Interview, 23 February). Similarly, Mr. Guohua states “Somehow we are still more bounded to home, to the family. I think somehow it’s similar to Turkey” (G. Guohua 2010, Interview, 2 March).

#### *Advantageous Local Products*

Finally, expatriates such as Mrs. Tsuchiya and Ms. Yajima particularly mention reasonable prices of local food stuff and textile products as another advantage of living here. They state that they feel lucky to find fresh fruit and vegetables as well as stylish and good-quality clothes. (Y. Tsuchiya 2010, Interview, 2 February; M. Yajima 2010, Interview, 11 February). Regarding textiles, Mr. K. (Indian) says that he prefers the way of clothing here by emphasizing the quality and modernity of the items, as well as materials (M. K. 2010, Interview, 19 February).

Similar to challenges, advantages can also be classified as follows: Advantages which are common for big cosmopolitans and city/country specific advantages. Here, high living standards and great availability of leisure time activities are some of the common advantages of cosmopolitans. On the contrary, advantages sourcing from social, political and cultural features, as well as advantageous local products are generally specific to the city/country. Referring to the previous quote from Birdseye and Hill, there are not only problems in developing countries but also there are particular advantages which attract expatriates and provide comfort for them. Consequently, advantages also have an impact on expatriate adjustment process (see 4.3.1.).

### **4.3. Inferences and Analysis**

#### **4.3.1. Research Findings**

We see that study findings are in accordance with human capital theory and the concept of rational choice. According to the research findings, almost all expatriates have been assigned to Turkey with their free will upon consensus by choosing among other options. Therefore, as Freeman and Oberg propose, considering the educational and

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<sup>12</sup> As you may realize, she points out the tea culture which is very habitual in the host culture and which is opposite of Mr. Guohua’s argument in page 31.

experiential aspects of these assignments, it is seen that expatriates are willing to be posted overseas, and as Morawska suggests, they are ready to take risks of relocation in order to gain more professional and practical experience. In light of this, it can be stated that many expatriates have improved lingual- (13 expatriates can speak Turkish), professional- (14 expatriates are at managerial levels) and interactional (they generally have friendly and informal social relations with the locals) skills, as well as obtaining better economic status during expatriation.

#### **4.3.2. The Impact of Different Variables on Expatriate Adjustment**

As discussed in the theoretical framework section, there are some factors – personal, job-related and external – that are influencing expatriate adjustment process. Aforementioned advantages and challenges which are the focus of this study compose the external or according to Birdseye and Hill, “environmental” factors influencing expatriate adjustment. For this study, external factors become meaningful because of the psychological state of the individual. It is a fact that these factors exist in the host environment independent from the expatriate and his mental state. As soon as the individual starts to perceive and experience the new environment, the factors also start to be identified as challenges or advantages. Correspondingly, they appear as facilitators or barriers to the adjustment process.

Furthermore, it can also be argued that these “environmental” factors may change from advantage to challenge and vice versa throughout the stages of adjustment. For example, the Chinese expatriate who mentioned the karaoke bars in Istanbul was happy about this as they represented elements of his home culture in the host environment during ‘honeymoon’ stage as McEvoy and Parker names and to refer to the U-curve approach (see p. 16-17). However, as soon as he visited them, he identified the differences and what he was assuming as an advantage turned into a challenge triggering the culture shock (depression period in the U-curve). To summarize, challenges and advantages in the host environment might be encountered by the expatriate at the beginning of or during the adjustment process and are tightly related to the process not just because they affect it but also get affected from it.

The interplay between the external factors and adjustment process might be simplified in such a way that if challenges are outweighing in the system, the adjustment process of the expatriate can be negatively affected (they arise as the external factors restraining adjustment) whereas outnumbering advantages might have a positive impact on the adjustment process (as external factors facilitating adjustment). However, this might not be the case always. In the above presented research findings, we can see that the number of challenges mentioned by the

expatriates exceed the number of advantages. Therefore, it would be natural to think that many of these expatriates are not pleased with their postings and have adjustment problems. Returning to the research findings to explicate this, we see that the average length of the stay of informants is 39 months which accounts for 3 years plus 3 months. Thinking about the duration of overseas assignments according to my informants which is minimum 2 maximum 6 years in general, Asian expatriates in Istanbul have tendency of assignment compliance independent of challenges. Besides, despite they stated problematic areas, none of the expatriates expressed intention of leaving during interviews. Instead, 21 informants (91%) told that they are glad to be an expatriate in Istanbul and 14 informants (60%) said that given the opportunity, they would prefer to be assigned there again.

In addition, if the expatriate is psychologically well-adjusted to the new environment due to individual determinants such as ability and willingness to adapt, good communication skills or self-confidence, he can transform arising challenges into his favor. On the contrary, if the expatriate is not ready, open or willing to adapt to new environment mentally, he can always come up with an excuse to ignore outnumbering advantages and hamper the adjustment process. Referring to the period of stay again, we see that a South Korean expatriate who arrived most recently has been staying in Istanbul for 8 months while an Indian expatriate has been living there for 11 years now. When I interviewed with the recently arrived South Korean expatriate, I could feel his stressful and depressed manner because he was still trying to settle his life in Istanbul. As Hofstede proposes it was observable that he was experiencing ‘culture shock’. Contrarily, the Indian fellow at the ‘stable period’ or ‘mastery stage’ was behaving almost like a local with his Turkish language skills, over-confidence and taking the life easy. Shortly, looking at the theoretical framework, the South Korean expatriate has not adjusted psychologically and socio-culturally yet and needs time to gain proficiency both in professional and daily-life terms. On the opposite side, the Indian expatriate is psychologically and socio-culturally well-adjusted and has already had enough time to gain proficiency (professionally: he is already a senior manager; practically: I observed how well he interacts with me and his local colleagues).

## **5. CONCLUSION**

To summarize, Istanbul as the financial capital of Turkey attracting investment opportunities of Western as well as Asian MNCs/TNCs is and will be a haunt for expatriates. As mentioned in introduction part and Chapter 3, since the number of Asian expatriates is also increasing in the business world, they appeal the attention of academic works or business

researches. This study which is a follower of this trend focused on Asian expatriates from Chinese, Indian, Japanese and South Korean communities in Istanbul. The data gathered from 23 informants mostly through personal interviews is utilized to detect the problems Asian expatriates face and advantages they have during their expatriation.

The challenges faced by Asian expatriates are presented as high cost of living, difficult official procedures, language and culture-related challenges, physical and social disturbances, on the one hand. On the other hand, living and working in a city like Istanbul provides them the following advantages: high living standards, secular social structure, liberal political atmosphere, cultural similarities and cheap local products. Besides, the study also presents that these challenges and advantages are the external factors influencing adjustment process. Regarding this, it concludes that whether they are facilitating or restraining the process is closely related to psychological state of the expatriate and the stage of adjustment. Accordingly, not all challenges appear as barriers in front of the adjustment process but they might be facilitators depending on the perception of the expatriate. In conclusion, psychological adjustment can be regarded as the most influential on the whole process and external factors' being challenge or advantage differs according to expatriate's psychological state.

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## APPENDIX I: Interview Questions

Date:

Interviewer: Özlem Özkan, Center for East and Southeast Asian Studies, Lund University, Sweden

Name of the interviewee:

Gender:

Age:

Nationality/City:

Marital Status:

Company:

### Questions:

- 1) Could you briefly define your educational/academic background?
- 2) Are you staying alone here or with your family? How do you feel about this?
  - a) Does your company have a policy about this? **(IF YES)** What is your company's policy about this issue?

**THE QUESTION BELOW (b) WILL BE ASKED ONLY IF THE PERSON LIVES ALONE!**

  - b) Does the social environment here make you forget about your loneliness or does it exacerbate this feeling?
- 3) How long have you been working in general and specifically with your current company?
  - a) Which department are you working in? What is your position and title in your company?
  - b) Which sector is the company operating?
  - c) When the company was established? And how long has it been operating in Istanbul?
  - d) How many people are working in Istanbul-based branch? What is the number of employees in the company in general?
- 4) Is this the first time that you are assigned abroad? **(IF NO)** Which other destination(s) were you assigned before? And how long have you stayed there?
- 5) Have you ever thought of living and working in Istanbul? Any attracting features of Istanbul?
- 6) Did you have any expectations with regards to living standards, social, cultural or economical environment in Istanbul prior to arrival? What image did you have in your mind before coming to here; in other words, how were you imagining the life in here?

- 7) Was it your free choice or will to come here? **(IF YES)** Why did you want to come here? Which event(s) led you to take this assignment?
- 8) How long has it been since you have moved Istanbul?
- What is the minimum and maximum length of tenures? What is the related corporate policy except immature returns?
  - Have there ever been immature returns from Istanbul within your company?
- 9) Have you taken or given any pre-departure training or after arrival any kind of orientation? **(IF YES)** In which areas such as cultural training, language courses, Turkish business or office environment, pre-visit to Istanbul, banking, health services, housing selection, schooling, shopping, social life or contacts, employment opportunities for spouses and etc?
- IF EXPATRIATE'S FAMILY IS HERE!** Did anyone else get training or orientation in the family?
  - Do you think that training or orientation helped you to overcome problems and for a smooth transition?
- 10) Do you think that your personal characteristics were effective for a smooth transition? **(IF YES)** Which characteristics/features of you have been effective such as being culturally prepared and sensitive, recognizing complexities in host cultures, mixing with host nationals, accepting the challenge of intercultural experiences, preferring social interaction, having the ability of empathy, being creative, realistic, patient, extraverted etc?
- 11) Are there any things which you think that you are away from or deprived of here? For example, particular food items, clothing, entertainment or leisure time activities etc.
- 12) Do you find Turkish nationals/society welcoming or disturbing? And in which ways?
- Do you feel comfortable in this country among host nationals?
  - Do you feel any pressure from the society? Any negative sights?
- 13) **(IT'S INTERVIEWEE'S FREE CHOICE NOT TO ANSWER THE FOLLOWING QUESTION REGARDING RELIGION)** Which religion do you follow?
- Do you feel free to practice your religion here?
  - How do you find the atmosphere here in this regard? And what do you think about it?
- 14) What kind of social relations with host nationals do you have, professional, friendly or just community relations; in terms of being formal-informal or direct-indirect?

- 15)** Are the socio-economical circumstances in Istanbul very different than in your hometown in South Korean/Indian/Chinese/Japanese? The term socio-economic covers demographic structure/population, level of unemployment, rate of illiteracy, health, infrastructure, GDP (Gross Domestic Product), income per capita, FDI (Foreign Direct Investment) and other welfare indicators.
- a)** What was your life like prior to moving here? Is it the same or very different? What immediate impacts did this socio-economic context change have on your life?
- 16)** How have your views about the socio-economic features of Istanbul changed since your arrival?
- 17)** How do you define Asian culture? And how do you relate South Korean/Indian/Chinese/Japanese culture to Asian culture?
- a)** What are the distinguishing features of South Korean/Indian/Chinese/Japanese culture for you?
- b)** Where do you place Turkish culture, within Asian, within European or between Asia and Europe as a trans-culture maybe? And in which ways?
- 18)** What do you dislike, and like the most about being an expat in Istanbul?
- 19)** Do you have any anecdotes such as shocking or striking events, namely any bad experiences, when you first came to Istanbul or during your stay until now/since you arrived?
- a)** Now vice versa, any surprisingly pragmatic incidents that you think you will always remember and tell as good memories?
- 20)** What do you advise to the new-comers? Which things do they need to be aware of and stay away from? What should they do?
- 21)** How do you find Istanbul in terms of enlarging people's vision, providing a different life perspective to foreigners?
- 22)** Are you glad to be an expatriate in Istanbul? And if you had opportunity, would you prefer to be assigned here again?

## **APPENDIX II: Advices to the new-comers**

“Take care of your belongings, bags or purses and you should not trust everybody because we Japanese trust easily. Especially ladies should not wear very short skirts; they need to pay attention to their clothing. Taxis generally charge more so I recommend you not to take taxis.” (Y. Tsuchiya 2010, Interview, 2 February).

“The new-comers should respect to the local people, local culture and the law, then they can live comfortably here and welcomed by host nationals.” (S. Wang 2010, Interview, 10 February)

“There is no need to mention positive stuff because new-comers first need to be aware of the threats. Especially the Japanese ladies should be careful about disrespectful and rude Turkish guys. In fact, Japanese people are not used to live abroad so they need to be extra careful.” (M. Yajima 2010, Interview, 11 February).

“I don’t want to advise anything to the new-comers. I think they should not get affected by the experiences or advice of others. Instead of this, they need to experience and see by themselves.” (S. Shiina 2010, Interview, 14 February)

“Do not to stay in Sultanahmet area. The sellers and shopkeepers are very disturbing there.” (R. Numata 2010, Interview, 14 February)

“They should come with an open mind and explore the country. They need to be cautious about various things. They should not get involved in unnecessary gossiping and should be happy with their job.” (D.S. Rawat 2010, Interview, 17 February)

“When you are in Taksim or Sultanahmet area be a little careful about taxi drivers. Otherwise, it is a very safe place.” (V. Namana 2010, Interview, 17 February)

“Be honest and open towards locals. If you want to say something, say what you have in your mind frankly; then your stress will get decreased.” (S. Ishikawa 2010, Interview, 18 February)



“Anyone who is coming to Turkey should have a proper visa first. Otherwise, they should not come to Turkey.” (A. Mittal 2010, Interview, 10 February)

“They should not come here only for sightseeing; I recommend them to talk to ordinary people and try to understand the locals. Also, in Sultanahmet area some locals talk to Japanese people but they are generally lying so the new-comers should be careful about them.” (M. Ishigaki 2010, Interview, 20 February)

“They should not come with prejudices whether this is good or bad. Basically, they should go and enjoy their life here as things are comparatively and definitely much better here than in India.” (P. Joshi 2010, Interview, 24 February)

“The new-comers should be patient because things that might be normal in Turkey or somewhere else might be very abnormal in Japan. They should be aware of that.” (G. Takahashi 2010, Interview, 24 February)

“Get a lot of lentils whenever coming to Turkey ☺ Whenever you are coming to a country, try to learn the language or at least the basics and study the culture. Turkish people are very sensitive; once you are close to them, you will really cherish the relationship.” (R. Puri 2010, Interview, 25 February)

“Turkish people are very generous to the guests and whenever somebody invites guests to their houses, they give presents to them. At the beginning, I was not aware of this tradition so I felt sorry. So I advise the new-comers to be aware of such traditions.” (S. Lee 2010, Interview, 26 February)

“They should not think that Turkey is a country in Africa ☺ because Chinese people are not very familiar with Turkey. Don’t get afraid, come to Turkey!” (G. Guohua 2010, Interview, 2 March)

“Bring some Chinese food and be careful with taxi drivers, especially at night time.” (D. Liurong 2010, Interview, 2 March)

“They should read about Turkish culture or they should know something. Otherwise, they may get upset, may always complain or go back to their countries.” (D. W. 2010, Interview, 4 March)

“First learn, and then try to understand. Expressing yourself is the last solution.” (T. Chang 2010, Interview, 10 February).

“They must learn Turkish, be careful in general and should not behave too flashy such as being drunk and misbehaving etc.” (M. K. 2010, Interview, 19 February)

“Just live like the Turks. Don’t be ashamed of shouting sometimes.” (Y. G. 2010, E-mail interviewing, February 12).

“My foremost advice would be telling them which tourist attraction places to visit and which restaurants to go. Be careful when you are out during night. You should not talk or criticize much but rather respect the society, locals, religion and religious issues” (T. Takhan 2010, Interview, 3 March).

**APPENDIX III: Global Location of Turkey/Geographical Positioning of Turkey**

(Source: <http://www.worldatlas.com/webimage/countrys/asia/tr.htm>)



**APPENDIX IV: Regional Map – Turkey and Vicinity**

(Source: <http://www.worldatlas.com/webimage/countrys/asia/trlarge.htm>)



## APPENDIX V: Istanbul City Map with Districts

(Source: <http://www.aia-istanbul.org/tr/content.asp?PID=%7BFD6B201A-8866-4435-934B-4D5640FA23AE%7D&PT=An%20overview%20of%20Istanbul>)

