

EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE, SELF-EFFICACY, ENGLISH LANGUAGE  
PROFICIENCY AND CROSS CULTURAL ADJUSTMENT AMONG CHINA  
SELF-INITIATED EXPATRIATES IN MALAYSIA

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*“To the glory of Allah and my Parent”*

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## ABSTRACT

Cross-cultural adjustment (CCA) is a vital part of expatriate accomplishments, it is a kind of adjustment that can be improved by exposing the expatriates to the facts and understanding of norms that is suitable for behaviors that are exhibited in a foreign country by means of cross-cultural adjustment. This research aims to ease interactions between China Self-Initiated Expatriates (SIEs) and national hosts via Emotional Intelligence, Self-efficacy and English language proficiency, thus offering expatriates a vision into the host country's culture to enhance their understanding of the new environment. Social Cognitive theory suggest that individuals form and display certain behavioral patterns which are categorized into three; personal factors, behavioral factor, and environmental. This current research uses the sample size of 87 SIEs respondents from China mainland which are selected via systematic random sampling. The questionnaire used in this research was a combination of constructed questions and adapted questions from previous studies. The three variables which are Emotional Intelligence, Self-efficacy and English language proficiency, and CCA was analyzed with Pearson correlation and multiple regressions with Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS). The result was presented in a descriptive and inferential manner. It exhibited that China SIEs in Malaysia were able to adjust well in Malaysia due to good Emotional Intelligence, Self-Efficacy and proficiency in English language. The findings also suggests that Self-Efficacy and Emotional Intelligence contributed significantly to CCA by the China SIEs while English language proficiency was found not to contribute drastically to enhance China expatriates' adjustment in Malaysia. It is recommended for future research to incorporate bigger sample size to further increase the accuracy of the research.

## ABSTRAK

Pelarasan silang budaya (CCA) penting sebagai matlamat ekspatriat, ia adalah satu jenis penyesuaian yang boleh dicapai dengan mendedahkan para ekspatriat tentang keadaan dan memahami norma-norma yang bersesuaian untuk tingkah laku yang dipamerkan di luar negara dengan cara pelarasan silang budaya. Kajian ini bertujuan untuk membantu interaksi antara ekspatriat China-(SIEs) dan negara tuan rumah berasaskan kecerdasan emosi, efikasi diri sendiri dan penguasaan bahasa Inggeris. Ia menawarkan visi kepada ekspatriat ke dalam budaya negara tuan rumah untuk meningkatkan pemahaman terhadap persekitaran yang baru. Teori kognitif sosial dikemukakan mengandungi tingkah laku individu boleh dikategorikan kepada tiga; faktor peribadi, faktor tingkah laku, dan persekitaran. Responden kajian ialah sebanyak 87 dari tanah besar China yang dipilih melalui persampelan secara rawak dan sistematik. Soal selidik yang digunakan dalam kajian ini adalah berbentuk gabungan soalan yang ubah suai dan diadaptasi daripada kajian lepas. Tiga pembolehubah iaitu kecerdasan emosi, efikasi diri dan penguasaan bahasa Inggeris, dan pelarasan silang budaya (CCA) telah dianalisa dengan menggunakan korelasi Pearson dan regresi dari Pakej Statistik Untuk Sains Sosial (SPSS). Keputusan kajian ditunjukkan secara deskriptif dan inferensi. Ia menunjukkan bahawa SIEs China di Malaysia mampu menyesuaikan diri dengan baik di Malaysia kerana kecerdasan emosi yang baik, efikasi diri sendiri yang tinggi dan kecekapan dalam bahasa Inggeris. Keputusan kajian juga menunjukkan bahawa efikasi diri dan kecerdasan emosi adalah penyumbang dengan ketara kepada CCA oleh SIEs China manakala penguasaan bahasa Inggeris didapati tidak menyumbang untuk meningkatkan penyesuaian ekspatriat China di Malaysia. Penambahan jumlah sampel kajian yang lebih besar untuk penyelidikan pada masa depan adalah disyorkan untuk meningkatkan lagi ketepatan penyelidikan ini.

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## **CHAPTER 1**

### **INTRODUCTION**

#### **1.1 Introduction**

This chapter provides the introduction of the study briefly from the background, problem statement, research question, objective, scope, limitation, significant of study, the conceptual definition and operational definition proposed are also included to support this study.

#### **1.2 Background of the Study**

The world is becoming a global market place; many people are working and living abroad. Most of them are Organizational Expatriates (OEs) who are transfer abroad by their companies to the international posts, or Self-Initiated Expatriates

(SIEs) are those who determined to reside and work overseas (Inkson, Arthur, Pringle and Barry 1997). In order to be efficient and integrate fully, these expatriates need to improve the environment quality and often times adjust to the new communication challenges to suit the new cultural context (Huang, Chi and Lawler 2005).

Adjustment has been the most important factor for an expatriate when an expatriate lived in another country with different culture for some period of time. Berry (1992) proposes adjustment is a condition of change occurring and helping an individual to better fit and lessen the divergence between the environmental demands, the personal mind-set and behavioral preference. The procedure of adjustment has been conversed in both the acculturation and expatriation literature. Black and Stephens (1989) recognized three components of adjustment in the expatriation literature,; first is general environment which consists of the level of comfort with general living conditions, such as climate, health facilities, and food, secondly, interaction with host country nationals and finally, work performance standards, job, and supervisory responsibilities.

Searle and Ward (1990) identified three facets in acculturation literature are; Psychological, Social-cultural, and Work adjustment. Similar facets of adjustment has been discovered which are the general environment, interacting with host country nationals and work adjustment.

For corporations attempting to compete in an international business environment, understanding and managing the effective adjustment of expatriate employees has become an important issue. Researchers have scrutinized a variety of

topics associated with Cross-Cultural Adjustment that center principally on OEs (Mendenhall and Oddou 1985; Black and Mendenhall 1990). The bases are; foremost, the expenditure of transferring expatriates and their households to the international place of duty are exceptionally high. For instance, a three-year task for an American expatriate was projected to cost between \$300,000 and \$1 million per annual (Allerton, 1997; Wentland, 2003). Secondly, the proportion of expatriate letdown is startling which can be found in diversity of researches that investigative the untimely arrival such as American expatriates revealed that the proportion of all obligations that are abruptly concluded early is ranges between 16 and 40 percent (Caligiuri, 2000a). In addition, the cost of the OEs are associated with lost business opportunities, damaged corporate relationship, and reduced productivity that could cost the Multi-National Companies (MNCs) much more (Storti, 2001).

It is for these reasons that research on expatriate Cross-Cultural Adjustment (CCA) has gained considerable attention (McEvoy and Parker, 1995; Black and Regersen, 1999; Shaffer, Harrison and Gilley, 1999; Takeuchi, Yun and Tesluk, 2002). The results of these studies mostly indicated that expatriates might depart prematurely if they do not adjust well to the host culture (Black and Stephens, 1989; McEvoy and Parker, 1995). Others remain that expatriates will demonstrate poor job performance if they have lack of adjustment (Kraimer, Wayne and Jaworski, 2001; Shaffer *et al.*, 2006).

Furthermore, among the expatriates, the SIEs is a new phenomenon (Hu and Xia, 2010; Myers and Pringle, 2005). Tung (1988) describes the SIE as an important element of the global workforce recently. Inkson, Arthur, Pringle, and Barry (1997)



have identified the characteristics of SIEs. Firstly, they are not employees of multinational organizations; they make the decision to work in a foreign country to face the challenges and living in an unfamiliar environment. Secondly, SIEs' international experience as their personal development, hence, the motivation of SIEs becoming an international worker is not achieving specific company goals. Third, SIEs do not have generous relocation packages as OEs, they finance their own relocation expenses base on personal savings. Fourth, SIEs have no boundaries in their career development, and they do not follow a traditional career path within an organization; they are willing to work in foreigner countries because of their self-development or for other personal agenda.

This study will focus on the China SIEs adjustment in Malaysia and the factors to contribute to Cross Cultural Adjustment (CCA) which are Emotional Intelligence, Self-Efficacy and English Language Proficiency.

### **1.3 Statement of the Problem**

The research aims are to find factors that influence the adjustment of China SIEs to a new environment and interacting with new people who may not be culturally and linguistically. According to Gollnick and Chinn (2006), adjustment may be a great challenge for international workers. Corporations, who often have to compete in an international business environment, understanding and managing the effective adjustment of expatriate employees is a matter of high priority. Studies in the past are focusing mainly on OEs (Mendenhall and Oddou 1985; Black and Mendenhall 1990).

The focus was particularly based on; the high cost of sending expatriates to foreign countries (Allerton, 1997). The high rate of terminated early by expatriate of all assignment (Caligiuri, 1999). Cut down cost associated with lost business opportunities, damaged corporate relationships and reduced productivity that could cost the MNCs much more (Storti, 2001).

With all the potential threat, miscommunication or poor communications can bring to failure to any meaningful business based on human interaction. So far very little attempts were made to investigate the relationship between Emotional Intelligence (EI) and CCA in detail, which is the focus of the present study. The study firstly considers the following variable: The relationship between Emotional Intelligence (EI) and cross cultural adjustment (CCA). This is because, corporations attempting to compete in an international business environment, understanding and managing the effective adjustment of expatriate employees has become an important issue (Ashkanasy, 2003).

Emotional Intelligence (EI) is defined as a set of capabilities, competences, and skills that helps one's ability to cope with environmental demands (Salovey and Mayer, 1990; Schutte, *et al.*, 1998). The two main reason previous studies lacked research on EI are; firstly, the successful expatriate are who can respond properly to the host environment in another country, and could different interpersonal work situations as well (Alon and Higgins, 2005; Huang *et al.*, 2005). Secondly, the level of EI was found that could critical for success in human activity and emotionally intensive areas, such as leadership (Goleman *et al.*, 2002; Humphrey *et al.*, 2008), work, and education (Van Rooy and Viswesvaran, 2004). Consequently, it can be

predictable that EI will be important for expatriates that dig up extremely and mixed up in communications with the citizens of the host nation and require to adjust with psychological pressure and diverse satisfactory outline and standard of expressive character.

The study secondly concentrates on Self-Efficacy which is related with level of psychological comfort, it is showing ones' feels in unfamiliar environment (Simeon and Fujiu, 2000). Theoretically, one of the most powerful individual variables that determine persistence in effort is the individual's belief or also known as Self-Efficacy (Black *et al.*, 1992a). A person with high Self-Efficacy is likely to not give up when he or she encounters adaptation problems. Therefore, withdrawal will is not likely to happen and positive adaptation is more likely to occur.

Expatriate adjustment is a taxing and complex procedure (Aycan, 1997; Caligiuri, 2000; Tung, 1998). a number of studies have been carried out and point out that the important function of adjustment for thriving expatriation and emphasizing the intricate and multidimensional scenery of the adjustment procedure, distinguishing between broad-spectrum living conditions, communicational, and work-related adjustment (Aycan, 1997; Bhaskar-Shrinivas *et al.*, 2005; Hechanova, Beehr and Christiansen,2003). Study carried out till present has been understood in illuminating the effect of diverse personality and appropriate emotions for instance; job, organizational, or institutional aspects of CCA. The previous incorporated researches that scrutinizes the effect of the Big Five behavioral qualities (Caligiuri, 2000; Huang, Chi, and Lawler, 2005); locus of management (Black, 1990; Lii and Wong, 2008); friendliness and malleability (Black and Stephens, 1989); individualistic and social

talent (Hechanova, Beehr, and Christiansen, 2003); language ability (Kim and Slocum, 2008); and, lately, Emotional Intelligence (Rose *et al.*, 2010) on CCA.

The study thirdly focuses on English Language Proficiency because it plays an important role in global business arena since English language has continuously become an acceptable language of international business (Crystal, 2003). Studies have indicated that, language barrier is a most challenging factor in expatriate adjustment in global entrepreneurship (Adler, 1991; Goodall, Li, and Warner 2006; Selmer 2006 and Tung 1988). Therefore, this study also investigates the relationship between English Language Proficiency and China SIEs' adjustment in Malaysia.

English Language Proficiency is ability of individual to be able to master both oral and written English language and be able to display it. The setting of particular language employ discovers its premises on foundation of genre studies. Bhatia (1993) defined genre as "*a recognizable communicative event characterized by a set of communicative purpose(s) identified and mutually understood by the members of the professional or academic community in which it regularly occurs.*" English Language Proficiency of expatriates in diverse settings might diverse, for instance, Du-Babcock (2007) opined that language could be classified as language for general purposes (LGP) and language for specific or professional use (LSP). According to this classification, English-language proficiency comprises of capability in general English and in professional English in addition to spoken and written English language.

This study is relevant to the globalization because the research proves that English language has become a medium of communication and has achieved 60 percent penetration of the world (David, 1997). Very soon English language will be speaking in remote village without the need of interpreter (DFID, 2012). There emerge the question of; how does English Language Proficiency affect the ability of expatriates to adjust to a cross-cultural environment and different set of people in foreign land? The Cross-Cultural Adjustment of SIEs from China is investigated in Malaysia to determine their coping style to be proficient in speaking and interacting with Malaysians.

There are extraordinarily little researches on assessing the correlation between English Language Proficiency and adjustment of expatriates in Malaysia which are in new environment and culture. Holden (1987) in his research indicated that in carrying out a meta-analysis of this subject matter, only a small number of researchers have considered language as a factor in cross culture interaction and functioning of expatriates at all situations and when they do, such matters are treated with not gravely. However, based on the literature reviewed, relatively little is known about Chinese from mainland China experiences in a Malaysian context (Mustaffa and Illias, 2013), because of the similarity between the two types of the Chinese, which are Chinese from mainland China and Chinese from Malaysia, who are difficult to differentiate from each other. This study is an attempt to fill in a gap in knowledge about China SIEs from mainland adjustment in Malaysian contexts.

Previous study has found the responses by human resource management about multinationals to deal with the common corporate language issue (Charles and Marschan-Piekkari, 2002; Marschan-Piekkari *et al.*, 1999a; Welch, Welch, and Marschan-Piekkari, 2001). Therefore, the study at hand takes a right step, the relationship of English Language Proficiency and the CCA of expatriates in carrying out day to day businesses in Malaysia, especially their adjustment to a culturally and socially different environment they find themselves to operate outside mainland China.

Past studies centered on Cross-Cultural Adjustment (Caligiuri *et al.*, 2001; Okpara and Kabongo, 2011); emotional contract (Haslberger and Brewster, 2009); spousal household assistance (Black and Stephens, 1989; Caligiuri *et al.*, 1998); organizational assistance (Caligiuri, Joshi, and Lazarova, 1999); advising (Mezias and Scandura, 2005); responsibility originality and job vagueness (Shaffer, Harrison, and Gilley, 1999); cultural detachment/cultural relationship (Black and Gregersen, 1991; Shaffer *et al.*, 1999); international knowledge (Selmer, 2001, 2002); in addition to a number of other issues (Hechanovaet *et al.*, 2003). With a small number of exceptions (Gabel, Dolan, and Cerdin, 2005; Lii and Wong, 2008; Tan, *et al.*, 2005) the function of sensation, and particularly of Emotional Intelligence (EI), Self-Efficacy and English Language Proficiency for expatriates' CCA has entertained comparatively modest consideration.

In this research there is an urgent need to examine expatriates' Emotional Intelligence (EI), Self-Efficacy and English Language Proficiency to be able to better explain the relationship of these variables influence on Cross Cultural Adjustment

(CCA) of the China SIEs in Malaysia. In order to further understand the role of Emotional Intelligence (EI), Self-Efficacy and English Language Proficiency in expatriates' adjustment and add to the (so far) very limited empirical studies on the topic the author choose this topic.

Summarily, among the several problem of CCA in any expatriates' in foreign land include the following, though not exhaustive: cost of relocation, early departure due to poor adaptation, dysfunctional operation and lack of interest at work, psychological trauma, loss of cultural value and loss of identity etc. This study therefore focuses on CCA problems faced by expatriates from China mainland in Malaysia. The research question therefore focuses on the effect of the Cross-Cultural Adjustment of China in Malaysia.

A considerable number of research relating to expatriate adjustment have been conducted, however most of them only dealt with specific individual factors. According to Nishida, (1985); Oguri and Gudykunst (2002) despite the increasing researches on Cross-Cultural Adjustment, communication researchers are often focusing on Cross-Cultural communication competencies, which have not taken into account work adjustment and work attitudes. While management researchers have taken into account both work and non-work related adjustment facets, their studies, are limited to one aspect of Cross-Cultural communication which can be Language Proficiency (Bhaskar-Shrinivas *et al.*, 2005). So far, management researchers have not even taken into account Emotional Intelligence (EI), Self-Efficacy and English Language Proficiency together in a single research. Therefore, this study intends to add empirical studies of the variables identified for the research which means

examining the relationship of Emotional Intelligence (EI), Self-Efficacy and English Language Proficiency on Self-Initiated Expatriate's CCA.

#### **1.4 Research Questions**

Research question are the main trust of any survey to be carried out and explain why the research is important. The research questions for this study are thus:

- i. What is the level of cross cultural adjustment among China Self-Initiated Expatriates in Malaysia?
- ii. What is the level of Emotional Intelligence among China Self-Initiated Expatriates in Malaysia?
- iii. What is the level of Self-Efficacy among China Self-Initiated Expatriates in Malaysia?
- iv. What is the level of English Language Proficiency among China Self-Initiated Expatriates in Malaysia?
- v. What is the relationship between Emotional Intelligence and Cross-Cultural Adjustment among the Self-Initiated Expatriate China in Malaysia?



- vi. What is the relationship between Self-Efficacy and Cross-Cultural Adjustment Self-Initiated Expatriate China in Malaysia?
- vii. What is the relationship between English Language Proficiency and Cross-Cultural Adjustment among the self- initiated expatriate China in Malaysia?
- viii. Which variable of Emotional Intelligence, Self-Efficacy and English Language Proficiency facilitate Cross-Cultural Adjustment among China Self-Initiated Expatriates in Malaysia?

### **1.5 Objectives of the Study**

The aim of this research is to assess the relationship of Emotional Intelligence, Self-Efficacy and English Language Proficiency on Cross-Cultural Adjustment among the China SIEs in Malaysia. In other to achieve the above stated aim, the following specific objectives are formulated thus:

- i. To assess the level of distribution of cross cultural adjustment among China Self-Initiated Expatriates in Malaysia.
- ii. To assess the level of distribution of Emotional Intelligence among China Self-Initiated Expatriates in Malaysia.

- iii. To assess the level of distribution of Self-Efficacy among China Self-Initiated Expatriates in Malaysia.
- iv. To assess the level of distribution of English Language Proficiency among China Self-Initiated Expatriates in Malaysia.
- v. To examine the relationship between Emotional Intelligence and Cross-Cultural Adjustment among the China Self-Initiated Expatriates in Malaysia.
- vi. To examine the relationship between Self-Efficacy and Cross-Cultural Adjustment among the China Self-Initiated Expatriates in Malaysia.
- vii. To examine the relationship between English Language Proficiency and Cross-Cultural Adjustment among the China Self-Initiated Expatriates in Malaysia.
- viii. To investigate the influence of Emotional Intelligence, Self-Efficacy and English Language Proficiency towards Cross-Cultural Adjustment among the China Self-Initiated Expatriates in Malaysia.

## 1.6 Hypothesis of the Study

The following hypotheses are formulated for the study based on the study objectives and research questions:

- H1: Emotional Intelligence has a positive significant relationship with China Self-Initiated Expatriates' Cross-Cultural Adjustment in Malaysia.
- H2: Self-Efficacy has a positive significant relationship with China Self-Initiated Expatriates 'Cross Cultural Adjustment in Malaysia.
- H3: English Language Proficiency has positive significant relationship with China Self-Initiated Expatriates' cross cultural adjustment in Malaysia.
- H4: Emotional Intelligence has significant influence on Cross-Cultural Adjustment among China Self-Initiated Expatriates in Malaysia.
- H5: Self-Efficacy has significant influence on Cross-Cultural Adjustment among China Self-Initiated Expatriates in Malaysia.
- H6: English Language Proficiency has significant influence on Cross-Cultural Adjustment among China Self-Initiated Expatriates in Malaysia.

## **1.7 Scope of the Study**

This study focuses on using the model of International Adjustment and Social Cognitive Theory as a foundation to investigate the impact of Emotional Intelligence (EI), Self-Efficacy and English Language Proficiency on China SIEs expatriates' adjustment that are working in two Companies in Malaysia, which are Company A and Company B.

The study of this research also centered on the CCA of China SIEs in Malaysia. This revolves around their Emotional Intelligence, Self-Efficacy, English Language Proficiency and CCA. It also includes the intellectual ability to cope with the challenges of new environment and ways of life that is different from ones cultural background and what they are used to.

The respondents of this research are the SIEs from China mainland who have sought the opportunity of global market to venture into working in Malaysia. Several factors are responsible for this which includes closeness to mainland China, availability of second generation China in Malaysia as citizen, booming market for ICT as most of the expatriates for this research are working in blue chip companies; which are companies that well established and are promising.

## 1.8 Limitations to the Research

Several limitations exist that affect the outcome of this research which may include: Foremost, methodology used as common variance was used and also all the measurements were evaluated by the same style (Pearson Correlation Matrix) (Podsakoff *et al.*, 2003). The questionnaire used in this research was reconstructed from Podsakoff et al.'s (2003) which used Likert Scale mainly. Future research should reflect on examining the consequences of SIEs' inspirational procedures in carrying out their legitimate duties in foreign land. Harman's single factor analysis was used to conduct the research and the analysis indicated that only about 30% of the variance that is lower to 50% accepted value, but it is higher than the stringent cut-off of 20%. Hence, this type of research need more than common method of variance (Podsakoff and Organ, 1986).

Another limitation to this research is the size of the respondents which are limited in number and may make generalization. The total numbers of China SIEs selected are from a single occupation and this may have affected the result if compared to inclusion of other professionals aside the blue chip organization used. Future researches should be carried out with samples consist of employees from other occupations, especially those who work in the real business world.

This research do not consider the well-being of the SIEs in Malaysia which was due to time factor and further research on the role of well-being in generating a constructive profits twist among, Emotional Intelligence, Self-Efficacy, and English Language Proficiency in making CCA functional.

## **1.9 Significance of the Study**

Although many researchers have examined Cross Cultural Adjustment, but there is no single research on China SIEs working in Malaysia. Also, Self-Initiated Expatriate is a relatively new phenomenon among business employees and conducting this study will help the organizations to be informed of the factors that may influence Self-Initiated Expatriates adjustment in order to be successful in their endeavor.

The result of this study will benefit these organizations' Human Resource (HR) department as a learning paradigm in the training course to enhance the quality of life and better work adjustment of China SIEs in Malaysia. This study will also benefit Expatriates from China who have a plan to relocate and work in Malaysia as SIEs, and the information about the study will help them to consider "how" to be ready to face the new challenges in adjusting to lifestyle of Malaysia.

## **1.10 The Conceptual Definition**

The following terms will be defined: Cross-Cultural Adjustment, expatriate, language proficiency, Self-Efficacy and Emotional Intelligence.

### **1.10.1 Expatriate**

An expatriate is an individual who is transferred from a country to another than their home country, to complete an international task (Harvey, 1985). Expatriate adjustment has been universally accepted as a multi-faceted procedure (Aycan, 1997; Black, 1988; Shaffer, Harrison and Gilley, 1999). There are four factors that were found in literature that shapes the accomplishment of every individual as an expatriate in foreign land to excel which include: job contentment, capacity to manage pressure at work, communication with head office, and interaction with the locals by the expatriates.

Based on Black's (1988) research four factors are the underlying issues for Cross-Cultural Adjustments among the American citizens who work in Japan; this corroborated the findings in the literatures. These factors are "the degree of psychological comfort" (Black and Gregerson, 1991, pp. 463): adjustment to general adjustment, work roles to the new living environment, and interaction with the people of the location of the work.

### **1.10.2 Emotional Intelligence**

Salovey and Mayer (1990) suggested the name "EI" as the capacity of individuals to treat his/her emotions accordingly. They describe EI as the detachment of social aptitude that entails the capability to scrutinize one's personal traits and

others' thoughts and feelings, to distinguish among all the traits and to employ this sequence to channel one's thoughts and accomplishment.

### **1.10.3 Self-Efficacy**

Self-Efficacy is described as the intensity of self-reliance that persons have in their capacity to achieve responsibilities (Bandura, 1986; Gist, 1987).

### **1.10.4 English Language Proficiency**

Language proficiency or linguistic proficiency is the ability of an individual to speak or perform in an acquired language so as to be able to communicate effectively and efficiently. English has been adapted as a global language in business, sport and all facet of life (DFID, 2012). In fact the UN nation has adopted it as the universal language and has been used it to dominate other languages worldwide. The American and British has succeed in making the language the most learned language globally as DFID (2012) implies that English language has achieve between 60 and 70 percent acceptance, and which makes it a global language.

English language has been acknowledged as imperative language by multinationals. Asuncion-Lande (1998) remarked that English has grown to be its own force, supported by information technology and increasing communications in the



global economy which has not make other languages attain such a position in the globalized world. The International Research Foundation for English Language Education (TIRF, 2009) testifies that, “*Proficiency in English as a second- or foreign-language in particular matters greatly in the global economy, and they matter to employers as well as to individuals*” This rising necessity of English Language Proficiency creates significant challenges for China (Chen, 2004; Ma, 2004). It is therefore incidental that English Language Proficiency has an effect on expatriates from China’s adjustment wherever they may be worldwide.

#### **1.10.5 Cross-Cultural Adjustment**

Cross-Cultural Adjustment is defined as the processes which occur, both psychological and behavioral, when two or more cultural groups, or their members, are in contact (Searle and Ward, 1990). Although there are differences degrees in the term acculturation also reflects the processes at an individual, or group level that occurs when two cultural groups interface (Berry, 2005). Cross-Cultural Adjustment is “the individual’s affective psychological response to the new environment and its variables” (Black, 1990). It also can be considered as the process of adjustment on the aspect of work and living condition in the unfamiliar environment. And it is the extent of perceived mental comfort and familiarity when one faces the culture on host country (Black, 1988; Black *et al.*, 1991).

## 1.11 Operational Definition

**Cross-Cultural Adjustment (CCA):** This is defined as a process of psychological Adjustment that allow individual to adapt to new environment when faced with uncertainty, unfamiliar, culturally and socially different environment.

**Self-Initiated Expatriate (SIE):** This is defined as individuals who made a decision to relocate and work abroad for their livelihood and adapt to the challenges of the new environment.

**Emotional Intelligence (EI):** This is defined as the adjustment of one's capability to organize, control and manage his or her emotions so as to deal with certain situation. This will allow an individual to be able to cope and adjust to a new environment that he/she finds himself/herself in, whether it is in home or abroad.

**Self-Efficacy:** This is defined as the ability of an individual to find the necessary trait that will enable him/her to cope with challenges faced in the process of carrying out his/her daily activities. It involves having self believe and competency to deal with any situations he/she finds in and has the confidence in their ability to accomplish tasks.

**English Language Proficiency:** This is defined as the ability of an individual to listen, write, and communicate in English and relate effectively through oral

and written language in their daily life for work, leisure and business.

**Cross-Cultural Adjustment (CCA):** This is defined as a process of psychological adjustment that allow individual to adapt to new environment when faced with uncertainty, unfamiliar, culturally and socially different environment.

**Chinese:** In this study Chinese are people from China mainland who are Self-Initiated Expatriate who are working in Malaysia to earn their living. They are not the second or third generation Chinese that are Malaysians. SIEs are from the mainland China to carry out their daily livelihood and work to the development of Malaysia.

## 1.12 Summary

This chapter has highlighted the meaning of CCA, the components of CCA and the relevance of the study. It shows that for any CCA to be achievable several factors act as limiting forces for expatriates to succeed in foreign land. These factors include, cost of relocation, the early departure of expatriates due to poor or lack of basic adjustment mechanism, dysfunctional operation due to poor adjustment, psychological trauma, loss of cultural value and loss of identity.

This study considers the effect of psychological adjustment on CCA among SIEs from China mainland. The research was able to identify various variables that affect the adjustment which are the Emotional Intelligence, Self-Efficacy and English Language Proficiency.

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