

## Where have all the expatriates gone?

A recent article in the *Economist* noted, not surprisingly, that most international migration takes place from developing to developed countries. No less than around 120 million people alive today have taken such a journey. The second largest flow is between developing countries involving about 80 million people. Only half that many migrate between developed countries and far fewer, seven million, leave from developed countries to go to developing ones. But what about expatriates? Where do they go? Unfortunately, we simply do not know since academic research on this relevant and important topic is missing. Although one may speculate that expatriates may display another pattern of flow than other migrants, we are badly informed about where they go. This is a serious gap in extant research literature since many empirical expatriate studies would benefit from such contextual information. *JGM*, as a specialist journal for expatriate research and other global mobility issues would be very interested in publishing such research on the macro picture of expatriate mobility.

As a fast rising academic research journal, *JGM* has achieved the Thomson Reuter ESCI status and is ranked by the Australian ABDC List as a B journal. The journal is also indexed by the Nordic countries and Brazil. The Editorial Advisory Board reads as a Who's Who in our area and the editorial team, reviewers, and authors are all specialists. Truly, *JGM* is managed by experts, for experts.

This year, two special issues of *JGM* are under way. The first, to be published in June, is Beyond corporate expatriation: examining neglected non-corporate communities, edited by Yvonne McNulty, Kelly Fisher, and Charles Vance. The other special issue in 2017 is Dangerous moves and risky international assignments, edited by Luisa Helena Pinto, Benjamin Bader, and Tassilo Schuster. All *JGM* special issues aim to fill important research gaps in extant literature.

At the beginning of this year, we formed a *JGM* Facebook group as a new way of interacting with scholars and practitioners interested in global mobility and expatriation. The group is managed by Yvonne McNulty, the Communications Editor of *JGM*. Since this is a closed group, please contact Yvonne ([ymcnulty@expatresearch.com](mailto:ymcnulty@expatresearch.com)) if you want to join. The *JGM* LinkedIn Group, also managed by Yvonne, is still very active and now has over 1,500 members.

*JGM* welcomes all kinds of rigorous research methods, but we also publish thorough theoretical developments and focussed literature reviews. Besides that, we are interested in research at various levels of analysis – individual, team, organizational, or even regional or national. We are interested in research from a variety of academic domains, as well as cross-disciplinary studies.

## In this issue

The first article, written by Jakob Lauring, Charlotte Jonasson, Jan Selmer, and Jodie-Lee Trembath deals with expatriate academics and their specific role as teachers, a largely ignored area, when examining their adjustment and work outcomes. Examining expatriate academics adjusting to a university position in China, it was found that teacher-student relations had a positive association with job satisfaction and that positive teacher-student relations increased job satisfaction more for individuals who were slower to adjust, perhaps experiencing high job demands and challenges in terms of intercultural job adjustment. In other words, expatriate academics that have difficulties adjusting will benefit more from



the social support that can originate from good relations to their students. This is one of the very few studies exploring the impact that students can have on expatriate academics. Katharina Puchmüller and Iris Fischlmayr have authored the second article. They investigate female international business travellers in dual-career families and their support. They explore in which way different sources of support are perceived as important and available. Interviewing women from both Western and non-Western countries, they find that across countries, support is mainly derived from within the family. Not surprisingly, the reported expectations and actually offered institutional or organizational support differ because of local institutional and cultural variations. The third contribution, written by Regina Kempen, Kate Hattrup, and Karsten Mueller, investigates the relationship of flexible and permeable boundary management with both life domain conflict and life domain enrichment among expatriates. As such, it is a unique investigation. Surveying a sample of expatriate academics at a university in Germany, they find relationships between the permeability and the flexibility of life domains, and work-private life conflict, private life-work conflict, and work-private life enrichment. There were no relationship between boundary management and private life-work enrichment. The findings emphasize the need to consider the role-related stakeholders of expatriates, especially in the private life domain. They also describe two clusters of boundary management used by the expatriates and discuss implications for the support of expatriates based on these clusters. The fourth contribution to this issue is authored by Liza Howe-Walsh and Nicole Torke. As one of the first studies, they investigate the role of and interaction between repatriation supporters to understand how this affects the repatriate experience. While the findings highlight HR professionals' responsibility for supporting line managers and other repatriation supporters in operational repatriation management, the authors identify a lack of communication among HR professionals and between them and line managers. The results corroborate the assumption that HR professionals and line managers' own experience with working abroad might affect the quality of support policies and practices for repatriates. Heidi Collins and Santina Bertone wrote the fifth article in this issue. To explore changes in the identity constructions of expatriate accompanying spouse, they collected interview data longitudinally throughout ten participants' first year of living in Malaysia. Findings indicate that men experienced threats to their career/worker identity, whereas women faced multiple threats to identities such as mother, wife/partner, child, and also their career/worker identity. Although the results of this small study may not be generalizable, it highlights the usefulness of longitudinal narrative inquiry. The last paper, authored by Kate Yue Zhang and Bart Rienties, using a mixed-method approach, the authors explore the differences in psychological contract breach and violation for organizational and self-initiated expatriates in China. They find that organizational expatriates experience lower levels of such incidences than self-initiated expatriates. Three broad thematic areas include uncertainties in functioning of contracts, differences in job securities and career development opportunities, and cultural differences. Support for self-initiated expatriates from employers may include comprehensive orientation and cultural training as well as long-term career advancement paths. This is a valuable contribution to the literature since research on the psychological contract of expatriates is limited, especially regarding differences between organizational and self-initiated ones.

The macro picture of expatriate mobility provides an important background to many studies on international work. For example, this is the crucial context against which one can further explore how expatriates adjust to a host location, by learning from locals or from other expatriates. With no other expatriates around, the latter alternative does not exist. Or, for a self-initiated expatriate to determine the next destination, it may be indispensable to know the competitive situation regarding expatriates in the local labour market in the contemplated host location.

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As a specialist academic research journal, *JGM* attracts both reputable authors and readers by creating expert content for experts. The *JGM* Editorial Advisory Board, the editorial team, and the best specialist reviewers all contribute to make *JGM* the leading outlet for academic research on global mobility and expatriate management.

**Jan Selmer**

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