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The influences of perceived organizational support and motivation on self-initiated expatriates' organizational and community embeddedness

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ABSTRACT

Drawing upon Self-determination theory and the Job Demands-Resources model, we examined the influences of perceived organizational support (POS: financial, career, and adjustment) and motivation (autonomous and controlled) on self-initiated expatriates (SIEs)' organizational and community embeddedness. Based on responses from 147 SIEs, financial POS positively related to controlled motivation and career and adjustment POS positively related to autonomous motivation. Autonomous motivation positively predicted both organizational and community embeddedness while controlled motivation was positively associated with community embeddedness. We also found that autonomous motivation mediates the influences of career POS on organizational embeddedness and adjustment POS on organizational and community embeddedness. In addition, controlled motivation mediates the influences of financial POS on organizational embeddedness.

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1. Introduction

As the boundaries between global markets have become more flexible and permeable (Sullivan & Arthur, 2006) and as employment relationships have become less organizationally-directed and more individually-directed, job seekers are increasingly crafting their own expatriation to take advantage of lucrative career opportunities created by a shortage of skilled professionals (Sullivan & Baruch, 2009). Meanwhile, with more than 38% of employers worldwide having difficulty filling positions due to the lack of suitable talent available in their markets (Manpower, 2015), both multinational and local organizations are increasingly relying on *self-initiated expatriates* (SIEs) to redress their shortage of skilled labor. In contrast with corporate expatriates, who are "sent overseas on a temporary basis to complete a time-based task or accomplish an organizational goal" (Harrison, Shaffer, & Bhaskar-Shrinivas, 2004, p. 203), SIEs instigate their own relocation to a country of their choice to pursue cultural, personal, and career

development opportunities (Jokinen, Brewster, & Suutari, 2008; Myers & Pringle, 2005; Tharenou, 2015), often with no definite time frame in mind (Andresen, Bergdolt, Margenfeld, & Dickmann, 2014; Suutari & Brewster, 2000). SIEs are not assigned to an international position, nor are their relocations pre-arranged by a multinational organization (Cerdin & Selmer, 2014; Richardson & Mallon, 2005). Consequently, they generally receive limited or no pre-departure training, preparation, or associated benefits and compensation packages for their expatriation (Howe-Walsh & Schyns, 2010). Indeed, they often fund their own relocation and may face more structural barriers and career constraints such as difficulties or long waiting times to obtain visas and work permits in some host countries (Al Ariss & Özbilgin, 2010).

SIEs are generally highly educated professionals who can add significantly to an organization's talent pool by bringing to their employer a particular set of international understandings and capabilities (Cerdin, Diné, & Brewster, 2014; Cerdin & Selmer, 2014). Employed by local or international companies in the host country, SIEs are considered an attractive alternative to traditional corporate expatriates and they may have certain comparative advantages (Tharenou, 2013). For instance, as local hires with non-local perspectives and greater global competence and

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sophistication, SIEs are often considered a vehicle for facilitating cross-cultural understanding and an international outlook in their workplaces (Vaiman, Haslberger, & Vance, 2015). In addition, as a local hire without the traditional expatriate's elite status, SIEs provide a contribution to HR and talent management in an environment that is often marked by potential tensions between traditional expatriates and locals (Toh & DeNisi, 2003). Thus, the effective management and retention of SIEs is an important issue for organizations.

Expatriate success, especially in terms of adjustment and withdrawal, has been a major focus of expatriate research for the last three decades. Most of this research has been based on the stressor-stress-strain paradigm or the psychological contract theory that has rationalized expatriate withdrawal as a process of reacting to the uncertainties or negative experiences of living (e.g., maladjustment to the community) and working (e.g., maladjustment to work or psychological contract breach at work) in a foreign country (Guzzo, Noonan & Elron, 1994; Harrison et al., 2004). More recently, however, researchers (e.g., Ren, Shaffer, Harrison, Fu, & Fodchuk, 2014) have begun to focus on the role of expatriate embeddedness. From this perspective and based on a sample of self-initiated international teachers in the United States and Hong Kong, Ren et al. (2014) demonstrated that expatriate organizational embeddedness, defined as the breadth and depth of connectedness in one's foreign posting, is an important predictor of expatriate retention (Reiche, Kraimer, & Harzing, 2011), even more so than adjustment (Ren et al., 2014). While existing expatriate research mostly focuses on the role of organizational embeddedness and has devoted less attention to community embeddedness, we argue that community embeddedness could be a factor that relates to expatriate retention because both work (organizational) and non-work (community) factors keep people rooted where they are (Mitchell, Holtom, Lee, Sablinski, & Erez, 2001). Indeed, based on a sample of SIE hotel workers in the Macau SAR of China, Lo, Wong, Yam, and Whitfield (2012) found that host country organizational embeddedness negatively predicted turnover intentions and host country community embeddedness further strengthened this negative relationship. Extending this emerging line of research, the purpose of this study is to investigate how SIEs become embedded in the host country organization and community by drawing upon the Job Demands-Resources (JD-R) model (Demerouti, Bakker, Nachreiner, & Schaufeli, 2001) and self-determination theory (SDT: Deci, Connell, & Ryan, 1989; Gagné & Deci, 2005).

Our first objective is to consider how different forms of one type of organizational resource (i.e., perceived organization support) contribute to SIE embeddedness. According to the JD-R model, resources encourage and enable individuals to broaden their behavioral repertoires, to forge strong interpersonal connections, and to flourish in their environments. For SIEs who initiate and are generally responsible for their own international relocation and who lack access to a parent organization in the home country, organizational support provided by the local employer may play a more important role in this process (Vaiman et al., 2015). Heeding the call of researchers who have suggested that a more complex conceptualization of perceived organizational support (POS) may be warranted in order to reflect the distinct influence of different forms of POS on employee outcomes such as performance and retention (Guzzo, Noonan, & Elron, 1993; Kraimer & Wayne, 2004), we consider financial, career, and adjustment support forms, each of which have been identified as significant resources for corporate expatriates (Kraimer & Wayne, 2004).

Our second objective in this study is to consider the role of two distinct motivational pathways whereby organizational resources influence SIE embeddedness. Although the JD-R model depicts the resource-based pathway to effective employee functioning as

motivational, the theory does not explicitly include motivation as a linking mechanism in this process. Drawing on self-determination theory (SDT), we offer an explanation for the underlying motivational mechanism that drives SIEs to leverage organizational support to become embedded. From an SDT perspective, there are two types of motivation: autonomous motivation and controlled motivation. Autonomous motivation indicates that a person behaves with a full sense of volition and choice, while controlled motivation means that a person engages in activities under pressure or to assert control (Deci, Koestner, & Ryan, 1999). The extensive empirical evidence on the application of SDT demonstrates that autonomous motivation yields optimal employee functioning, such as effort, persistence, performance, prosocial behaviors, and various indices of psychological well-being, such as adjustment (Philippe & Vallerand, 2008; Weinstein, Dehaan, & Ryan, 2010; Weinstein & Ryan, 2010); controlled motivation yields sub-optimal outcomes (Deci & Ryan, 2008).

Applying both the JD-R and SDT perspectives, we seek to understand how financial, career, and adjustment forms of POS assist SIEs in becoming embedded in their organizations and communities. In the achievement of this purpose, our study makes three contributions to the expatriate and embeddedness literatures. First, we contribute to the expatriate literature by integrating the JD-R model and SDT as an explanation for how multi-dimensional forms of POS influence SIEs' organizational and community embeddedness through autonomous and controlled motivation; we go beyond traditional inquiries about "what" motivates SIEs and delve deeper into "how" SIEs are motivated. While understanding the motives of SIEs is important and informative, existing studies fall short on elucidating the underlying psychological mechanism that promotes desirable expatriate behaviors (Chen, Kirkman, Kim, Farh, & Tangirala, 2010). Thus, our first contribution heeds the call of expatriate researchers that more research is needed to clarify how the motivational process contributes to expatriate effectiveness (Chen et al., 2010). Because it has been assumed that SIEs receive little organizational support, we draw attention to the important role of support resources on SIE embeddedness. In doing so, we will be able to inform organizations regarding policies and practices that may help them to keep their SIE employees motivated and attached to their organizations and communities. Second, we contribute to the SIE literature by adopting a multi-wave design that has the potential to advance existing empirical research. Existing research on SIEs has mainly investigated expatriation experiences in a cross-sectional setting by examining all the predictor and criterion variables simultaneously (see Tharenou & Caulfield, 2010; Tharenou, 2008 for exceptions). In our study, we examine SIEs' POS and motivation at Time 1 and embeddedness at Time 2 (one year later). The longitudinal research design contributes to the expatriate literature by providing a more holistic picture regarding how POS and motivation may shape the development of SIEs' organizational and community embeddedness over time. Third, we also contribute to the embeddedness literature by adopting a motivational lens to predict employee embeddedness. In doing so, we provide a potential explanatory mechanism for explaining how all employees, global and domestic, may become embedded in their organizations and communities.

2. Theoretical framework and hypotheses

The concept of organizational and community embeddedness was first introduced by Mitchell et al. (2001) as a composite construct comprised of three components: fit, links, and sacrifices. Organizational fit refers to the extent to which an individual's capabilities match organizational requirements and an individual's interests match organizational rewards. Organizational links are

the number of ties individuals have with other people and activities at work. Organizational sacrifices represent the rewards or benefits employees would have to give up if they leave their organizations. On the other hand, community fit is the extent to which an individual's needs and interests are congruent with the community environment. Community links reflect the number of ties an individual has with other people and activities in the community. Last, community sacrifices refer to the benefits an individual has to give up when leaving the community such as inexpensive health care system or subsidized daycare (Mitchell et al., 2001; Ng & Feldman, 2012; Ng & Feldman, 2014). Mitchell et al. (2001) operationalized both organizational and community embeddedness as equally weighted composites of fit, links, and sacrifice.

However, Crossley, Bennett, Jex, and Burnfield (2007) argued that perceptions of embeddedness emerge from idiosyncratic, complex mental processes and the initially proposed formative approach introduced by Mitchell et al. (2001) might preclude investigation of inputs to embeddedness beyond fit, links, and sacrifices. Therefore, Crossley et al. (2007) argued that employee embeddedness can be conceptualized and operationalized in terms of gestalt subjective perceptions. Though both perspectives have their merits, we chose Crossley et al.'s (2007) perceptual approach in this study because we are more interested in understanding the process that contributes to SIEs' global embeddedness to their organization and community.

To understand what motivates SIEs to become embedded in the host organization and community, we draw upon the JD-R and SDT perspectives. As depicted in Fig. 1, we propose that organizational resources in the form of perceived organizational support (i.e., financial, career and adjustment) will stimulate either autonomous or controlled forms of motivation. In turn, motivation will influence the embeddedness of SIEs. In the following sections, we offer theoretical and empirical support for our proposed model.

2.1. Perceived organizational support (POS) and SIE motivation

Perceived organizational support is the degree to which employees believe that their employers value their contributions and care about their well-being (Rhoades & Eisenberger, 2002). From a JD-R perspective, such organizational resources follow a motivational pathway whereby employees experience positive affective and behavioral outcomes. To clarify this motivation pathway, we draw on SDT. SDT researchers have shown that supportive interpersonal environments lead to autonomous motivation (Gagne, Koestner, & Zuckerman, 2000; Kuvaas, 2009). While SDT has been widely applied to investigate employees' motivation at work and relevant outcomes (Gagné & Deci, 2005), only two studies (i.e., Gagné et al., 2010; Gillet, Gagné, Sauvagère, & Fouquereau, 2013), to the best of our understanding,

have looked at the role of POS in the prediction of employees' motivation according to SDT. Both studies found that POS was positively and significantly related to autonomous motivation and controlled motivation, which contradicted the original hypothesis that POS should only be associated with autonomous motivation. In an attempt to provide a potential explanation for these unexpected results, we further investigate this inconsistency by deconstructing POS into three dimensions (financial, career, and adjustment) and examining their influence on SIEs' autonomous (i.e., volitional) and controlled (i.e., forced) motivation to work.

2.1.1. Financial POS and motivation

Financial POS is defined as the extent to which the organization cares about the employee's financial needs and rewards the employee's contributions through various forms of compensation and employment benefits (Kraimer & Wayne, 2004). Financial POS for corporate expatriates can include a lucrative package such as assignment bonuses, cost-of-living adjustment, and other perks. On the other hand, SIEs are generally paid based on their professional qualifications and placed on the pay grid in accordance with local employees. Based on domestic literature, employees generally view compensation or financial rewards as a transactional psychological contract or exchange of their investment and commitment toward work (Lawler, 2000). Such reciprocal perceptions may hinder employees' autonomous motivation and increase their controlled motivation as they feel they have to do something in exchange for their financial rewards (Morrell, 2011). Our argument is in line with SDT researchers' assumption that individuals' autonomous motivation will decrease and controlled motivation will increase when they receive contingent monetary payments (Deci, 1972). A meta-analytic result also showed that extrinsic rewards (e.g., money and allowances) significantly undermined autonomous motivation and stimulated controlled motivation (Deci et al., 1999). Therefore, we propose:

Hypothesis 1a. Financial POS is positively related to SIEs' controlled motivation to work and negatively related to SIE's autonomous motivation to work.

2.1.2. Career POS and motivation

Career POS is defined as the extent to which the organization cares about the employee's career needs (Kraimer & Wayne, 2004). For example, career POS for SIEs can include a mentor when SIEs first arrive in a new country with a new job or long-term career planning (Selmer, 2000). Unlike financial POS, we expect career POS to be related to SIEs' autonomous motivation to work. Within SDT, autonomy support has been regarded as the most studied social-contextual factor for predicting autonomous motivation (e.g., Black & Deci, 2000; Pelletier, Fortier, Vallerand, & Brière,

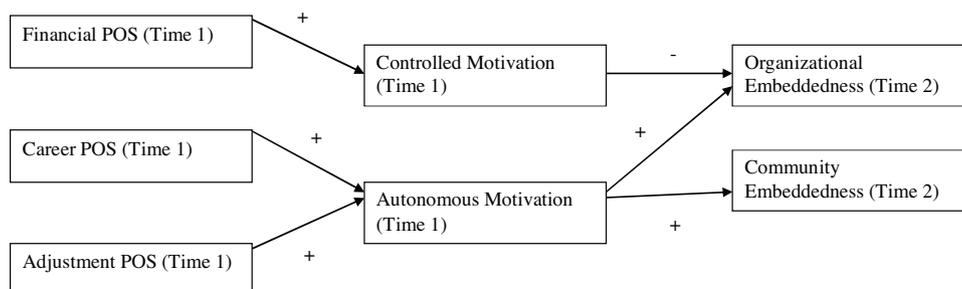


Fig. 1. Proposed Model of SIE Embeddedness.

2001). Organizational practices are considered to be autonomy-supportive when organizations provide employees with a meaningful rationale for doing the tasks, emphasize choice rather than control, and acknowledge employees' perceptions and needs (Deci et al., 1989). Within the context of career POS, organizations that take an interest in employees' careers and consider employees' goals and feelings when making career decisions enter into a relational psychological contract with employees and send signals to employees that they have discretion in choosing their career paths and goals and that organizations are autonomously-supportive in terms of their careers. This will enhance employees' autonomous motivation to work. Indeed, a recent study by Salmela-Aro, Mutanen, and Vuori (2012) found that training programs that enhance employees' career preparedness (example of career POS) positively predicted employees' autonomous work motivation. In addition, Clayton (2015) found that employees with organizations that cared about their well-being and career options after mergers and acquisitions were more autonomously motivated to work. Thus, we propose:

Hypothesis 1b. Career POS is positively related to SIEs' autonomous motivation to work.

2.1.3. Adjustment POS and motivation

Adjustment POS is defined as the extent to which the organization cares about the employee's adjustment (including family members) after a job transfer (Kraimer & Wayne, 2004). For SIEs, adjustment POS may include organizational policies and practices (i.e., cross-cultural training, language training, relocation assistance) that ease the actual transition and adjustment to the foreign community and workplace (Waxin & Panaccio, 2005). The nature of adjustment POS aims at helping both employees and their family members to get adjusted and immersed in their jobs and residential communities, thus it is a relational form of psychological contract between the employer and the SIE. As such, we expect adjustment POS to be related to SIEs' autonomous motivation to work. Organizations that provide assistance to help employees and their families adjust to the foreign country in both work and non-work domains would lessen employees' perceived difficulties for working and living abroad. This would in turn motivate employees to more autonomously work abroad. Indeed, instrumental support that eases employees' psychological discomfort such as adjustment POS was found to increase employees' autonomous motivation because it enhances employees' perception that work and non-work difficulties will be solved and they can fearlessly pursue their goals and careers at their own discretions (Vallerand, 1997; Van Yperen & Hagedoorn, 2003).

Hypothesis 1c. Adjustment POS is positively related to SIEs' autonomous motivation to work.

2.2. SIE motivation and SIE embeddedness

According to SDT, higher levels of motivation do not necessarily lead to better outcomes if the motivation is controlled rather than autonomous. Many empirical studies have shown that autonomous motivation leads to more positive outcomes than controlled motivation (see Deci & Ryan, 2008 for a review). For example, autonomous motivation has been found to positively influence desirable employee outcomes such as satisfaction (e.g., Gillet, Gagné et al., 2013; Graves & Luciano, 2013), organizational commitment (e.g., Bo, 2013; Graves & Luciano, 2013) and negatively influence turnover intentions (Gillet, Gagné et al., 2013). On the other hand, controlled motivation has been found to

positively relate to turnover intentions (Gillet, Gagné et al., 2013) and negatively relate to job satisfaction (e.g., Gillet, Gagné et al., 2013; Salinas-jiménez, Artés, & Salinas-jiménez, 2010). In addition, researchers also found that autonomous motivation can enhance individuals' positive attitudes such as enjoyment and happiness (Gillet, Vallerand, Lafrenière, & Bureau, 2013; Miquelon & Vallerand, 2006), and individuals who are autonomously motivated have more resources to engage in greater depth of goal striving (Hortop, Wrosch, & Gagné, 2013; Ntoumanis et al., 2014; Parker, Bindl, & Strauss, 2010) and proactive and adaptive coping (Parker, Bindl, & Strauss, 2010).

While the relationship between autonomous motivation and employees' optimal functioning has been well-established in the domestic literatures, very few scholars have focused on expatriates' or SIEs' autonomous motivation and their outcomes. Although some research investigates the effect of general work motivation or cross-cultural motivation on expatriates' outcomes such as work adjustment (Chen et al., 2010) and work performance (Varma, Pichler, & Toh, 2011) and SIEs' outcomes such as social network development (Richardson & McKenna, 2014) and cross-cultural adjustment (Froese, 2012), these studies did not specifically investigate the role of autonomous motivation. We argue that SIEs' autonomous motivation specifically plays an important role on their optimal functioning when compared with other types of "assigned" expatriates because SIEs generally lack structural support and it is their autonomous motivation that drives them to expatriate and perform effectively.

Based on the discussion above, we expect that SIEs who are autonomously motivated will have more energy and resources to proactively adjust and become comfortable with their working and living environments compared to traditional expatriates who have received substantial support from their employers. SIEs who are autonomously motivated will also have more energy to broaden their social networks and extend their interpersonal relationships both in the organizations and the communities. Along the same vein, we expect SIEs who are more autonomously motivated and have more social networks might receive various forms of benefits from organizational domains (i.e., promotion opportunities; supportive mentors and supervisors) and community domains (i.e., supportive friends and neighbors; quality community service such as daycare) which make them more embedded to the organization and community. If SIEs leave their organizations and communities, they may have to surrender some benefits such as their established work and non-work social networks (Pinto & Araujo, 2016) in the host country.

While research on motivation and community embeddedness is scant, we argue that SIEs who experience controlled motivation might feel that their resources are depleting and also find it taxing to feel comfortable with and become attached to their organizations. As a result, they are less likely to become embedded within their organization. In this study, we only hypothesize that SIE's controlled motivation to work negatively predicts organizational embeddedness because the only source of controlled motivation is financial POS. When SIEs are financially dependent only on the organization and do not have such a relationship with the community, we do not expect controlled motivation at work will have an influence on SIEs' community embeddedness. Thus, we propose:

H2a-b. SIEs' autonomous motivation to work is positively related to their (a) organizational embeddedness and (b) community embeddedness.

H3. SIEs' controlled motivation to work is negatively related to their organizational embeddedness.

2.3. Mediating effects of SIE motivation

From the resource perspective (Halbesleben & Wheeler, 2008), organizational embeddedness and community embeddedness describe the resources derived from organizational and community domains that enmesh an individual within a specific organization or a specific community. That is, an individual accumulates organizational and community resources to the degree that an individual feels attached to the organization or community, feels a sense of fitting with the job or community, and feels a strong psychological need to protect the resources accumulated by belonging to the organization or community. POS researchers (e.g., Rhoades & Eisenberger, 2002) suggest that POS is valued by employees because it assures them that assistance will be available when they have to carry out their jobs effectively and deal with stressful situations. Based on the JD-R model, we argue that POS is a form of organizational resource that enhances the attachment between employees and their organizations and communities. That is, POS is a motivational impetus for SIEs to become embedded in their organizations and communities.

In terms of the specific forms of POS, we believe that financial and career POS will be positively associated with organizational embeddedness only; adjustment POS will influence both organizational and community embeddedness. With respect to financial POS, previous research found that employees receiving financial rewards were more committed to their organizations (Misra, Jain, & Sood, 2013). However, even if SIEs receive a decent pay package and feel tied to the organization, they may still dislike the community in which they reside due to other environmental factors (Nazir, Hussain Shah, & Zaman, 2014). Similarly, career support initiatives also lead to greater organizational commitment (Bambacas & Bordia, 2009; Kawai & Strange, 2014; Kraimer & Wayne, 2004). From an embeddedness perspective, various career support activities (e.g., socialization tactics and mentoring) have been positively related to newcomers' person-organization fit (Sluss & Thompson, 2012), to extensive intra-organizational networks and organizational commitment (Bozionelos, 2008; Chew & Wong, 2008), and to organizational retention (Newman, Thanacoody, & Hui, 2012; Reiche et al., 2011). However, expatriate researchers have also found that POS is domain specific; expatriate general adjustment was only associated with off-the-job POS (Takeuchi, Wang, Marinova, & Yao, 2009). Thus, we expect that career POS will influence SIEs' organizational but not community embeddedness. Because the nature of adjustment POS is such that it focuses on helping both employees and their family members to become comfortable within their organizations and residential communities, it will contribute to both forms of embeddedness. In the expatriate context, researchers have found that adjustment POS enabled expatriates to be more adjusted to the work and general environments (Kraimer & Wayne, 2004) and their interactions with host country nationals (Andreason, 2003).

While the JD-R model proposes a motivational pathway linking resources with positive employee outcomes, it does not explicitly include a motivational construct. However, SDT does contend that motivation mediates the relationship between need satisfaction and employee outcomes such as performance, organizational commitment, and psychological well-being (Gagné & Deci, 2005). Insofar as need satisfaction is derived from perceptions of organizational support (Gillet, Fouquereau, Forest, Brunault, & Colombat, 2012), we propose that the organizational resources of financial, career, and adjustment POS will influence SIE embeddedness through a motivational mechanism. To more directly examine this underlying motivational mechanism whereby resources lead to embeddedness, we propose that SIEs'

motivation will mediate the relationships between different types of POS and organizational and community embeddedness. From an SDT perspective, however, we argue that this motivational pathway may be more complex than originally conceptualized by JD-R researchers. As we argued above, all forms of POS will be positively associated with either organizational and/or community embeddedness. However, earlier we contended that financial POS will be positively related to controlled motivation, but career POS and adjustment POS will facilitate SIEs' autonomous motivation. Both types of motivation then predict SIEs' organizational embeddedness and community embeddedness – but in opposite directions. Taken together, these arguments suggest that SIEs' motivation will mediate the relationships between different types of POS and SIEs' embeddedness. However, the positive effects of financial POS on embeddedness will be counteracted by the negative influence of controlled motivation, but the positive influences of career and adjustment POS will contribute to embeddedness through the influence of autonomous motivation. More specifically, we propose:

H4a. SIEs' controlled motivation to work mediates the positive relationship between financial POS and SIE organizational embeddedness.

H4b. SIEs' autonomous motivation to work mediates the positive relationship between career POS and SIE organizational embeddedness.

H4c-d. SIEs' autonomous motivation to work mediates the positive relationships between adjustment POS and SIE (c) organizational and (d) community embeddedness.

3. Method

3.1. Data collection and samples

We collected data from SIE academics currently working and living in several regions around the world at two points of time (one year apart). As embeddedness is something that takes time to establish, so we wanted to be sure to give all respondents enough time to experience this. In order to ensure that only SIE academics were selected, four initial screening methods were used which is in line with current studies that targeted SIE academics (e.g., Isakovic & Whitman, 2013; Selmer & Luring, 2011). First, foreign sounding names related to particular countries or regions (e.g., an Asian name in an U.S. institution) were selected for further investigation. Second, we verified that the nationality of the respondent was different than that of the host country to ensure their expatriate status. This was done by checking the educational backgrounds of potential respondents as well as their curriculum vitae. Most of the SIE academics obtained their bachelor and/or masters' degree in their home countries but acquired their terminal (e.g., Ph.D.) degree in a host country. To further confirm our respondents' expatriate status, we directly asked them to report their country of origin and nationality in the survey. While some of our respondents reported that they hold dual citizenships from their country of origin and the host country, none of them are originally from the host country. Third, we confirmed that the SIEs' current academic job was a regular position at their university (the respondent was a tenure-track or tenured professor and not a PhD student or an adjunct professor). Fourth, we confirmed that the respondent acquired his/her current academic job independently to ensure self-initiation.

Overall, we contacted 4125 SIE academics with valid email address at Time 1 and 245 of them accepted our survey invitation.

Due to the email spam filter and outdated faculty website information, we are not able to precisely estimate the response rate at Time 1. Among the initial 245 respondents, 203 respondents indicated their willingness to participate our Time 2 survey. One year later (Time 2), surveys were distributed to these 203 respondents and we received 147 complete and useful responses, representing a 72% response rate. At Time 1, we collected responses for POS and motivation as well as respondents' demographics. At Time 2, we collected responses for embeddedness.

Survey participants (N=147) who completed our surveys for both times were originally from eleven countries (i.e., United States, Canada, China, South Korea, Taiwan, New Zealand, India, Netherland, United Kingdom, South Africa, Sweden) and were working in four world regions: North America (61%), Asia (25%), Europe (11%), and Australia (3%). While we did send survey invitations to SIE academics in Latin America and Africa, we did not receive any responses. In our sample, 57% were male and 83% were married. Average age was 39.55. All respondents have a doctoral degree. The average organizational tenure for the respondents is 3.4 years. 86% of our respondents were assistant professors and the rest were associate professors and full professor.

3.2. Measures

All study variables were measured using multiple-item, validated scales. Detailed information on each measure used in this study is described below.

3.2.1. Perceived organizational support

Perceived organizational support (POS) was measured using a 12-item scale developed by Kraimer and Wayne (2004). The scale consists of three subscales (4 items each) measuring financial POS, career POS, and adjustment POS. A sample item for financial POS is "The organization has taken care of me financially." A sample item for career POS is "I feel that the organization cares about my career development." A sample item for adjustment POS is "The organization has provided me with many opportunities to ease the transition to the foreign country." All items were rated on a seven-point Likert-type scale ranging from 1 = strongly disagree to 7 = strongly agree. The internal consistency estimates (Cronbach's alpha) for financial POS, career POS, and adjustment POS in this study are 0.94, 0.92, and 0.94 respectively. Factor analysis also supported the three factor structure ($X^2(51) = 261.62, P < 0.01; CFI = 0.93, TLI = 0.93, RMSEA = 0.06$) with good fit indices when compared to the one factor structure ($X^2(54) = 546.37, P < 0.01; CFI = 0.79, TLI = 0.74, RMSEA = 0.18$) when all three types of POS were combined.

3.2.2. SIE motivation

Motivation was measured using the Motivation at Work Scale (MAWS) developed by Gagné et al. (2010). We asked the respondents to indicate the reason why they would put effort into their work. This scale comprises five types of reasons for work based on SDT: external (e.g., Because others will reward me financially if I put enough effort in my job), introjected (e.g., Because otherwise I will feel bad about myself), identified (e.g., Because putting effort in this job aligns with my personal values), intrinsic (e.g., Because the work I do is interesting), and amotivation (e.g., I don't think this work is worth putting effort into). All items were measured on a seven-point Likert-type scale ranging from 1 = not at all because of this reason to 7 = completely because of this reason. Identified motivation and intrinsic motivation were merged to form the measure for autonomous motivation. External motivation and introjected motivation were merged to form the measure for controlled motivation. The internal consistency estimates (Cronbach's alpha) for the autonomous motivation and controlled motivation in this study are 0.93, and 0.87, respectively.

3.2.3. SIE embeddedness

SIE embeddedness was measured by the embeddedness scale originally developed by Crossley et al. (2007) and recently modified by Ng and Feldman (2014). Both organizational embeddedness and community embeddedness scales consist of six items, respectively. We chose to adopt Crossley et al.'s (2007) global measure because we are mainly interested in SIEs' general attachment to their organizations and their communities. All items were rated on a seven-point Likert-type scale ranging from 1 = strongly disagree to 7 = strongly agree. A sample item for organizational embeddedness is "It would be difficult for me to leave this organization." A sample item for community embeddedness is "I am tightly connected to this community." The internal consistency estimates (Cronbach's alpha) for the organizational embeddedness and community embeddedness in this study are 0.89, and 0.94, respectively.

3.2.4. Control variables

We included three demographic variables, gender, age, organizational tenure and host country's length of stay to eliminate potentially spurious relationships between our study variables. Indeed, these variables are frequently used as control variables when SIEs' intention to go abroad, intention to stay, and turnover intentions are of major concerns (i. e., Tharenou & Caulfield, 2010; Tharenou, 2008). Respondents were asked to report their gender (0 = male; 1 = female) and age. We also asked respondents about

Table 1
 Descriptive statistics and correlations.

Variables	Mean/s.d.	Alpha	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11
1. Financial POS	4.78/1.55	0.94											
2. Career POS	4.27/1.45	0.92	0.49**										
3. Adjustment POS	3.30/1.69	0.94	0.41**	0.46**									
4. Autonomous Motivation	5.85/1.07	0.93	0.17	0.40**	0.43**								
5. Controlled Motivation	4.05/1.17	0.87	0.44**	0.12	0.12	0.08							
6. Organizational Embeddedness	4.35/1.42	0.89	0.19*	0.32**	0.44**	0.44**	0.34**						
7. Community Embeddedness	3.58/1.66	0.94	0.07	0.13	0.38**	0.39**	0.26*	0.57**					
8. Gender	0.42/1.11	n/a	-0.21*	-0.11	-0.13	0.18	0.22*	0.18	-0.16				
9. Age	39.55/6.57	n/a	0.18	-0.04	0.06	0.11	-0.06	0.22*	0.07	-0.39**			
10. Organizational Tenure (Months)	40.62/18.96	n/a	0.18	0.06	0.14	0.03	0.21**	0.23*	0.11	-0.20*	0.67**		
11. Host Country Length of Stay (Months)	71.35/23.11	n/a	0.14	0.11	0.23*	0.06	0.09	0.14	0.24*	0.14	0.32**	0.43**	-

* p = 0.05.

** p = 0.01.

the length (in terms of months) they have worked with their current employer and the length they have stayed in the host country to measure their organizational tenure and length of stay in the host country.

4. Results

Before testing our hypotheses, we first performed a confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) to ensure the discriminant validity among study variables. Results indicated that our hypothesized model of seven factors (financial POS, career POS, adjustment POS, autonomous motivation, controlled motivation, organizational embeddedness, and community embeddedness) fits the data well, $X^2(719) = 1039.09, P < 0.01; CFI = 0.93, TLI = 0.94, RMSEA = 0.05$, and significantly better than other theoretically possible models (i.e., five-factor model when three POS measures are combined: $X^2(730) = 2347.23, P < 0.01; CFI = 0.76, TLI = 0.78, RMSEA = 0.21$ or three-factor model when three POS measures are combined, two motivation measures are combined, and two embeddedness measures are combined: $X^2(737) = 4132.10, P < 0.01; CFI = 0.64, TLI = 0.65, RMSEA = 0.25$). These results support the distinctiveness of the measures used in this study.

Descriptive statistics, Cronbach’s alphas, and correlations for all the variables used in this study are presented in Table 1. As can be seen, all variables display good internal consistency. Correlations involving control variables were generally consistent with expectations. Thus, we proceed to the hypotheses testing.

We used multiple regression analysis to test our hypotheses. Hypotheses 1a, b, and c examined the relationship between POS and SIE motivation. As expected, financial POS is positively associated with controlled motivation ($\beta = 0.29, p < 0.01$). However, we did not find a negative association between financial support and autonomous motivation. Thus, Hypothesis 1a is partially supported. Career POS positively relates to autonomous motivation ($\beta = 0.27, p < 0.05$) but not controlled motivation, which supports Hypothesis 1b. Last, Adjustment POS positively relates to autonomous motivation ($\beta = 0.36, p < 0.01$) but not controlled motivation, which supports Hypothesis 1c. Regarding Hypothesis 2, autonomous motivation is positively related to organizational embeddedness ($\beta = 0.39, p < 0.01$) and community embeddedness ($\beta = 0.42, p < 0.01$), which supports both Hypotheses 2a and b. However, contrary to our expectation, controlled motivation is positively

related to organizational embeddedness ($\beta = 0.18, p < 0.05$). Therefore, Hypothesis 3 not supported. Results for the regression analyses are shown in Tables 2 and 3, respectively.

According to Hypotheses 4a–d, motivation will mediate the effects of POS on embeddedness. We employed an SPSS Macro approach recommended by Preacher and Hayes (2008) that uses a bootstrapping method (95% confidence interval based on 10,000 bootstrapping sample) to examine the mediation effects. In comparison with other approaches for testing mediation effects, this new method has two advantages: (1) rather than arbitrarily requiring a normal distribution for the standard error of the indirect effect, it generates bias-corrected confidence intervals for the standard errors that can be used in nonparametric tests; and (2) it offers a direct test of the indirect effect. Hayes (2012) offers a macro that can calculate bootstrapping directly within SPSS. The bootstrapping procedure assumes that the distribution of the measured variables approximates that of the population while it avoids making the often tenuous assumption that the indirect effect is distributed normally. If zero does not fall between the resulting confidence intervals (CI) of the bootstrapping method, one can conclude that there is a significant mediation effect (different from zero) to report. The narrower confidence interval indicates higher accuracy of the results. Results from the bootstrapping analyses indicated that controlled motivation mediated the relationship between financial POS and organizational embeddedness (95% CI: 0.0071–0.1362). Thus, Hypothesis 4a is supported.

Results from the bootstrapping analyses also indicated that autonomous motivation mediated both the career POS (95% CI: 0.0366–0.1907) and the adjustment POS (95% CI: 0.0742–0.1453) relationships with organizational embeddedness as well as the adjustment POS – community embeddedness relationship (95% CI: 0.1366–0.4471). Therefore, Hypotheses 4b, c, and d are supported.

5. Discussion

Recently there has been a surge of research targeting independent and internationally mobile professionals such as SIEs (Doherty, Richardson, & Thorn, 2013; Makkonen, 2015; Vaiman et al., 2015). While both researchers and practitioners have begun to acknowledge the importance of SIEs as a source of human capital in global talent management, our understanding

Table 2
 Regression results for the direct effect of POS on SIE motivation.

Predictors	Standardized Regression Coefficients			
	Autonomous Motivation		Controlled Motivation	
	Step 1	Step 2	Step 1	Step 2
Controls				
Age	0.15	0.09	0.27**	0.04
Gender	0.13	0.20*	0.24**	0.20*
Organizational Tenure	0.09	0.01	0.04	0.09
Host Country Length of Stay	0.18	0.14	0.13	0.15
Perceived Organizational Support (POS)				
Financial POS		0.05		0.29**
Career POS		0.27**		0.05
Adjustment POS		0.36**		0.09
F (Full model)	4.75*	6.15**	4.11*	5.49**
R ²	0.14	0.27	0.11	0.26
Adj. R ²	0.11	0.23	0.08	0.24
ΔR^2		0.13**		0.15**

* p = 0.05.
 ** p = 0.01.

Table 3

Regression results for the direct effect of SIE motivation on SIE embeddedness.

Predictors	Standardized Regression Coefficients			
	Organizational Embeddedness		Community Embeddedness	
	Step 1	Step 2	Step 1	Step 2
Controls				
Age	0.14	0.13	0.19*	0.07
Gender	0.31**	0.06	0.10	0.14
Organizational Tenure	0.27*	0.23**	0.29**	0.18*
Host Country Length of Stay	0.19*	0.18	0.26**	0.19*
SIE Motivation				
Autonomous Motivation		0.39**		0.42**
Controlled Motivation		0.18*		0.16
F (Full model)	14.66**	23.97**	8.47**	9.44**
R ²	0.29	0.43	0.16	0.26
Adj. R ²	0.25	0.39	0.13	0.22
Δ R ²		0.14**		0.10**

* p = 0.05.

** p = 0.01.

regarding how organizations can motivate and retain this type of employee remains limited. Drawing upon the JD-R model and SDT, this study sheds light on this under-researched issue by examining the relationships between SIEs' POS, motivation, and embeddedness. With data from 147 SIE academics that responded to our survey at two time points, our findings highlight the importance of POS and autonomous motivation on SIEs' organizational and community embeddedness. After elaborating on the theoretical implications of our findings, we discuss the practical implications as well as the strengths and limitations of our study.

5.1. Theoretical implications

Most of the expatriate research has focused on a stressor-stress-strain paradigm or psychological contract theory that has rationalized expatriate withdrawal as a process of reacting to the uncertainties or negative experiences of living and working abroad. By drawing upon the JD-R model and SDT, we move beyond the stressor-stress-strain paradigm and psychological contract theory and examine SIE's embeddedness through a resource-based pathway. Indeed, research based on the stressor-stress-strain paradigm has primarily examined factors that either induce or reduce the threats inherent in global assignments and the influence of these factors on expatriates' well-being and adjustment (Harrison et al., 2004; Takeuchi, 2010). On the other hand, expatriate research based on psychological contract theory has focused on the exchange agreements between expatriates and their employers and the influence of these agreements on expatriation experiences and expatriate outcomes (Guzzo et al., 1994; Haslberger & Brewster, 2009). While informative, neither approach adopts a motivational point of view, thus failing to explain the process through which expatriates become embedded. Based on the JD-R model's assumption that a resource-based pathway to effective employee functioning is motivational, we offer an explanation for the underlying motivational mechanism that drives SIEs to leverage organizational resources, such as POS, to become embedded via autonomous and controlled motivation. This study also demonstrates the usefulness of applying the resource side of the JD-R model to expatriate research. In doing so, we make several contributions.

First, the present study contributes to the literature by using a more complex conceptualization of POS and examining the distinct

influences of different forms of POS on SIEs' organizational and community embeddedness through motivation. Our findings suggested that different types of POS were associated with autonomous motivation and controlled motivation, respectively. Specifically, financial POS was associated with controlled motivation and career POS and adjustment POS were associated with autonomous motivation. This finding provides a potential explanation to some SDT researchers' (i.e., Gagné et al., 2010; Gillet, Gagné et al., 2013) concerns that POS, opposite to their expectations, also predicted controlled motivation.

To further clarify the potentially different motivational pathways that various forms of POS may take, we conceptualize forms of POS as types of psychological contracts, defined as employee's beliefs regarding the mutual obligations between the employee and the employer (Rousseau, 1989). According to Rousseau (1990), there are two types of psychological contracts: transactional and relational. Transactional psychological contracts are characterized by specific, economically oriented exchanges between the employer and the employee (e.g., compensation, financial allowance) while relational contracts (e.g., personal support and training and development) are characterized by open-ended socio-emotional agreements focused on maintaining the long-term relationship between the employer and the employee. Although both types of psychological contracts are based on a social exchange relationship between the employer and the employee and violations of both negatively relate to employee outcomes such as organizational citizenship behavior (Hui, Lee, & Rousseau, 2004) and expatriate adjustment (Chen, 2010), the transactional contract, represented by financial POS, seems to parallel the controlled form of motivation while the relational contract, represented by career and adjustment POS, is more aligned with autonomous motivation. Just as differential effects of transactional and relational contracts on employee attitudes and behaviors have been identified (Zhao, Wayne, Glibkowski, & Bravo, 2007), we also found that different forms of POS follow different motivational pathways to embeddedness.

Our findings suggest that it is possible that some aspects of POS are more like the relational aspect of psychological contract (e.g., career POS and adjustment POS) and affect autonomous motivation while others resemble the transactional aspect of psychological contract (e.g., financial POS) and affect controlled motivation. In general, POS that entails more materialistic values and reciprocal

relationships such as financial POS tend to undermine the autonomous motivation of SIEs (Gagne & Deci, 2005) and POS that considers SIEs' career and adjustment in the host country tends to enhance their autonomous motivation. Although it is possible that certain types of career support (e.g., manipulative mentoring), if not used appropriately, could be perceived as coercive, and leads to controlled motivation and negative outcomes (Eby, Buits, Lockwood, & Simon, 2004), autonomy-supportive career POS should positively predict autonomous motivation. This implies that the 'tone' of the resource needs to be 'supportive'. If it is perceived as 'manipulative' or 'inappropriate', it is no longer a resource and may actually have adverse effects on employee outcomes. This suggests that an even further decomposition of resources needs to be considered when examining the effects of resources on employee outcomes.

Regarding the relationships between SIE motivation and their organizational and community embeddedness, we found that SIEs who were more autonomously motivated to work abroad were more likely to perceive higher levels of organizational embeddedness and community embeddedness. This result is in line with other researchers' findings that employees who are autonomously motivated to work demonstrated higher level of attachment to their organizations such as affective commitment (e.g., Gagné et al., 2015). Furthermore, this result also suggests that in addition to the pull forces such as fit, link, and sacrifice as proposed by previous embeddedness researchers (Mitchell et al., 2001), the antecedents of organizational and community embeddedness can also be motivational. While we were surprised to find a positive relationship between controlled motivation and organizational embeddedness, this could possibly be attributed to the fact that certain antecedents of controlled motivation in the work (e.g., financial rewards, career advancement/tenure opportunity) domains are viewed as important benefits and opportunities SIEs do not want to give up. In other words, personal situation and workplace characteristics can create a strong pull force for employees to become embedded in their organizations (Kiazad, Holtom, Hom, & Newman, 2015).

Finally, although the direct effects we examined in this study (POS – motivation and motivation – embeddedness) are informative and extend the respective literature bases, the most interesting result was that autonomous motivation mediated the relationships between career and adjustment POS and organizational embeddedness and between adjustment POS and community embeddedness. Our study shows that autonomous motivation is an intermediary mechanism that provides an explanation for how POS ultimately influences SIEs' organizational and community embeddedness. In essence, career and adjustment POS promote SIEs' autonomous motivation, which in turn enhances their organizational and community embeddedness. The existence of autonomous motivation as a mediator between POS and embeddedness contributes to the literature by highlighting the importance of motivation on SIEs' embeddedness. Indeed, given that SIEs usually encounter tougher situations than corporate expatriates (Vaiman et al., 2015), promoting high quality motivation (e.g., autonomous motivation) helps SIEs to direct, energize, and sustain the intensity and persistence of their self-directed transition.

While controlled motivation is generally associated with negative outcomes, in this study, we found that SIEs' controlled motivation not only positively related to their organizational embeddedness but also served as a mediating link between financial POS and SIE organizational embeddedness. While this is somewhat surprising and is against the assumption of SDT, this counter-intuitive finding could be attributed to the fact that most of our respondents were assistant professors (86%) in their late thirties to early forties (average age: 39.55) and had relatively shorter organizational tenure (3.4 years). They might still be in the

process of striving for tenure and have mortgages to pay or other financial burdens. In other words, financial support counts relatively more to them when compared to their tenured colleagues. Thus, financial POS still motivates these relatively young SIEs through controlled motivation, especially their materialistic needs to attach to their jobs and communities.

5.2. Practical implications for organizations

In addition to the theoretical implications, the results from this study have practical implications for organizations. We suggest that for organizations that employ SIEs, in order to increase their organizational embeddedness and community embeddedness, the provision of organizational supports that enhance their autonomous motivation is important. More specifically, because many SIEs decide to relocate to a host country to pursue cultural, personal, and career development opportunities (Jokinen et al., 2008; Myers & Pringle, 2005), it seems that career-related and adjustment related forms of support provided by employers are more intrinsically motivating. Thus, while it is still essential to provide competitive financial support to SIEs to satisfy their financial needs, it is relatively important to provide career support and adjustment support to make them intrinsically attached to their organizations and their communities. For example, organizations can provide career mentoring (career-related) and cross-cultural training and (adjustment related) for SIEs. These practices have been argued to be beneficial during expatriates' adjustment process (Howe-Walsh & Schyns, 2010; Waxin & Panaccio, 2005). In addition, HR initiatives (e.g., social network events; co-working systems) that can broaden SIEs' professional and personal networks may also enhance SIEs' motivation to work abroad and enhance their organizational embeddedness and community embeddedness (Howe-Walsh & Schyns, 2010).

5.3. Strengths, limitations and future research

As with all studies, our research has both strengths and limitations. The first strength of this study is that we examined SIEs' embeddedness through influences of POS and motivation using a two-wave design whereby we collected responses at two different time points. By doing this we responded to the call of expatriate researchers (e.g., Tharenou & Caulfield, 2010) to move beyond cross-sectional studies that only collect data at one time point. The second strength of this study is that we empirically examined our hypotheses by using responses from SIEs with different cultural backgrounds (representing SIEs originally from eleven countries) and now working in four different world regions. The diversification of our respondents' backgrounds increase the generalizability of our study results to SIEs who have different demographic backgrounds and choose to work in different countries.

There are also some limitations of this study. One potential limitation of this study rests with the sample. All our respondents are SIE academics who work in universities, which could limit the generalizability of our findings to general SIE professionals who work for organizations. However, the respondents in our study chose to become expatriates as they may have searched for employment opportunities in the host countries based on their research and teaching interests, and this make them very different from assigned corporate expatriates. In addition, similar to other types of organizations, the university sector has become increasingly international and academics all over the world are now part of the global labor market (Mamiseishvili & Rosser, 2010). In other word, academics have the discretion to initiate their expatriation either to another university or a company which represents a key characteristic of SIEs. Also, the general demographic characteristics

of our academic SIE sample are comparable to the demographic profile of non-academic SIEs (e.g., Nolan & Morley, 2014; Pinto & Araujo, 2016), which suggests that the two groups are similar. For example, non-academic SIEs are usually in their mid-thirties, male dominant (more than 50%), and originally from different locations of the world. Though researchers (e.g., Selmer & Luring, 2013; Selmer & Luring, 2016; Vaiman et al., 2015) have indicated that SIE academics can well represent general SIE professionals, we still urge future researchers to consider using samples comprised of SIE employees from other occupations to fully capture potential occupational effects on the dynamics we have observed. Along this vein, our argument in this study centers on the argument that autonomous motivation has a stronger effect for SIEs than for other types of expatriates. While we do not have data from corporate expatriates to examine this assumption, future research should explicitly test this using a corporate expatriate sample.

Another limitation of this study has to do with our small sample size. One potential explanation is that many SIE academics could be too occupied by research, teaching, and service responsibilities which prevented them from having spare time to participate in our surveys. While our sample size provided adequate power (0.88) to detect statistical significance in our regression analyses, a larger sample would have allowed greater power (Cohen, 1992). Last, though we applied SDT in this study to assess the mediating role of motivation on POS – embeddedness relationship of SIEs, future research might examine the role of other mediators in these relationships. For instance, Baard, Deci, and Ryan (2004) have shown that the satisfaction of psychological needs for competence, autonomy, and relatedness (Deci & Ryan, 2008) was a mechanism through which organizational and individual difference variables had effects on employee optimal functioning. Future research addressing the role of basic need satisfaction on SIE motivation and embeddedness would appear promising. Along a similar vein, future researchers are encouraged to take a motivational perspective to study other types of expatriates (i.e. corporate expatriates, skilled immigrants) and to further explore the possible factors that contribute to their embeddedness (Tharenou, 2015).

While the results of this research shed light on the research of SIEs and their embeddedness, future research could expand upon this study by investigating factors other than organizational support that influence SIEs' motivation and embeddedness. Specifically, we encourage researchers to acknowledge the influence of the host country environment as an important contextual factor on SIEs' perceived support and embeddedness. According to Belot and Ederveen (2012), cultural proximity is a very important influence on the level of individual mobility between two countries. Specifically, SIEs tend to target countries that have cultures, languages, and customs similar to their own or countries with cultural links and certain ethnic groups due to cultural fit and psychological comfort (Al Ariss & Özbilgin, 2010; Alshahrani & Morley, 2015). In addition, countries that welcome and have friendly policy and infrastructures toward foreign visitors (e.g., immigrants; temporary workers) can motivate and facilitate the assimilation of SIEs. For example, Agullo and Egawa (2009) found that a change in migration procedures (e.g., certain employment visas no longer require employer sponsorship) facilitated the increase of SIEs (knowledge workers) in Japan as well as their mobility within occupations. Thus, it is possible that a country that has higher cultural proximity to the SIEs and friendly policies toward foreign workers can provide more support to SIEs and this might either directly influence SIE motivation or strengthen the relationships of perceived organizational support on SIEs' motivation and embeddedness. Finally, while this study focuses on the motivation of SIEs, we expect that the positive effect of autonomous motivation is not only limit to SIEs and we encourage future researchers to examine the influence of

autonomous motivation on the career experiences of other global employees, such as traditional expatriates and international business travelers (Shaffer, Kraimer, Chen, & Bolino, 2012).

6. Conclusion

The effective management of global talent, such as SIEs, represents a critical challenge for today's organizations. Our study highlights the important role of motivation as a vehicle for channeling support resources to enable SIEs to become embedded in their organizations and communities. Through the lens of SDT, we found that career POS and adjustment POS are two important forms of support that facilitate SIEs' autonomous motivation to work abroad. We also demonstrated that financial POS enhances SIEs' controlled motivation, which in turn increases their organizational embeddedness. We encourage future researchers to further clarify this process for SIEs and other types of global employees.

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