Amanda Bakken Roaldsnes

An Exploration into the Temporal Elements of Expatriates' Social Capital Needs

A qualitative study

Master's thesis in International Business and Marketing
Supervisor: Njål Andersen
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Abstract

Organizations rely on a diverse global talent pool to stay competitive in today's globalized marketplace. At the individual level, relocating to a new country is challenging for expatriates as they are detached from their established home-based social networks and must adjust to a new unfamiliar environment. To help adjust and foster successful relocation, expatriates seek social support from their social networks to decrease the uncertainty of the relocation process. However, little research has explored the temporal aspects of expatriates' social capital needs.

In this study, I examine the social capital needs that expatriates have during the first years of living in Norway. Second, I explore a temporal aspect of when the different social capital needs occur and explore the extent of having these needs met in relation to expatriates' subjective psychological well-being, job satisfaction, and social well-being.

I use a qualitative exploratory research design, with the primary data collected from ten face-to-face semi-structured interviews with business expatriates from multinational organization in Ålesund. I use a multiple name generator/interpreter to collect the expatriates' social networks to complement the interviews and measure access to social capital.

The main finding is that expatriates' social capital needs change over time. I identified three phases of different social capital needs based on five categories distinguishing differences between the phases. The three phases are the initial phase (0-6 months), the professional socialization phase (6-12 months), and the integration phase (12+ months). The five categories are time, characteristics, success criteria, social support providers, and transition triggers. Different supportive actors in the network provide support for each phase. The findings indicate that if the expatriates' social capital needs are met, this positively influences the expatriate's perceived success. However, when needs are not met, it can have negative outcomes both at the individual level and organizational levels.

This study contributes to advancing the theoretical understanding of expatriate research by providing insights about specific social support agents and what these social relationships can provide for expatriates in different phases of the assignment. Thus, advancing social capital theory by showing the changing value of social capital as contexts develop. Second, this study demonstrates an awareness of temporal aspects of expatriate adjustment, as neglected in previous research.

The practical implications of the study are organizations should be aware that expatriates need continuous support as new social capital needs emerge over time. In the initial phase, the HR department can provide instrumental support for practical needs. In the professional socialization phase, the expatriates' leaders, and colleagues can provide inclusion at the workplace. In the social integration phase, the organization can facilitate the expatriates to develop networks outside the workplace, thus increase social capital in this phase.

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Second, I wish to thank the respondents for kindly taking the time to participate in this research and for sharing insights with me. It was truly a privilege to meet each one of you. Thank you for broadening my views on what it is like to be a newcomer to Ålesund.

Last but not least, I want to thank my family for holding up with me during this past year. I want to thank my husband for his ongoing support, and encouragement. A great thank you to my parents and my parents-in-law for babysitting when needed. Mixing higher education with toddler life for sure spices things up, and your help has been invaluable. I am forever grateful for all my supportive ties.

Amanda Bakken Roaldsnes   *Ålesund, 16.12.2022*

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Chapter 1. Introduction

To be successful in today's globalized marketplace, organizations rely on a diverse global talent pool (Kuptsch & Pang, 2006) to foster innovation, knowledge transfer and enhance international business strategy and opportunities (McNulty & Tharenou, 2004; Suutari & Brewster, 2003). Such an international talent pool often consists of 'business expatriates' including organizationally assigned expatriates (OE) and self-initiated expatriates (SIE) (Vaiman et al., 2015). Appointing employees to work abroad or hiring international employees helps organizations develop their competencies and management skills and achieve organizational goals.

Managing expatriates remains a big challenge for international organizations. International employees face several difficulties concerning their personal and professional lives after relocating, leading some to withdraw from assignments or even leave the organization (Shaffer et al., 2012) if the organization has no systematic plan to retain and support the expatriate (Lazarova & Caligiuri, 2001). There are several negative consequences of unsuccessful relocation, including poor performance due to difficulties adjusting to the foreign environment or disillusionment with parent company support at the individual level. Unsuccessful expatriation may harm expatriates' career and well-being and their family, who often make personal sacrifices for the assignment (Adelman, 1988). For organizations, it is costly and resource-intensive to make the wrong hire or lose competent employees. Considering that the international workforce represents a significant investment for organizations (McNulty et al., 2009; Shaffer et al., 1999), how expatriates adjust and perform in their jobs has great importance at the organizational level (Aycan & Kanungo, 1997).

Adjusting to the new environment and feeling comfortable in the host culture are prerequisites for conducting business effectively (Bhaskar-Shrinivas et al., 2005). Social support is one of the crucial predictors of expatriate adjustment (Adelman, 1988; Aycan, 1997; Black et al., 1991; Toh & DeNisi, 2007). Studies show that as part of the adjustment process at the new location, expatriates seek social support from their social networks to decrease the stress caused by the uncertainty inherent to the relocation experience (Albrecht

& Adelman, 1984; Kraimer et al., 2001; Liu & Shaffer, 2005). The expatriate literature often states colleagues, family, locals, and other expatriates as sources of support (Caligiuri & Lazarova, 2002; Ong & Ward, 2005) which belong to different domains of an expatriate's social network, often described as the family domain, host country national domain and parent-company domain (Takeuchi, 2010).

Understanding the mechanisms underlying expatriate success is an important field of research for international human resource management researchers and practitioners. A meta-analysis by van der Laken et al. (2019) reveals that the levels of adjustment, commitment, performance, and retention of expatriates depend on the type and domain of different sources of support. However, most studies has referred to general social *support* (Black, 1990; Black & Gregersen, 1991; Tsang, 2001; Wiese, 2013) and social *networks* (Claus et al., 2015). Few studies specify who the supportive agents in the expatriates' networks are and what type of support they give (for exception, see Bayraktar, 2019), partially neglecting what these social relationships can provide for expatriates (Mao & Shen, 2015). Furthermore, little research has explored the role of time in expatriate adjustment (Hippler et al., 2015). To target an organization's limited resources most effectively, it is of practical importance to know when to intervene with correct support to use the available resources to assure expatriate success (Hippler et al., 2015). Mezias and Scandura (2005) state that adjustment dynamics may differ in various relocation stages; hence, expatriates may need different forms of social support in each stage.

I intend to contribute to the expatriate relocation literature by exploring what the social capital needs that expatriates have during an assignment are. Second, I contribute by exploring a temporal aspect of when the different social capital needs occur and exploring the extent of having these met in relation to expatriates' subjective psychological well-being, job satisfaction, and social well-being.

1.2 Purpose of the Study and Research Questions

The study's overall purpose is to better understand when and how organizations can support expatriates to stimulate success criteria and promote positive outcomes such as a wish to stay in the region/country. For organizations, it is costly and resource-intensive to make the wrong hire or lose competent employees. Thus, ensuring the success of international employees is important. For individuals, unsatisfactory expatriate performance has both a personal and professional cost. Consequences of unsuccessful relocation are poor performance due to difficulties adjusting to the foreign environment or disillusion with parent company support. Unsuccessful relocation may harm the expatriates' careers, reduce self-esteem, and well-being (Dowling, 2004). Thus, a successful relocation process is in the best interest of both individuals and organizations.

Based on the study's overall purpose, the study's objectives are to explore the expatriates' social capital needs after relocation and whether these needs vary over time. Further, a second objective is to explore to what extent the expatriates' social capital needs are met and how this can be related to expatriate success criteria. Therefore, the study focuses on the following research questions:

1. *What are the expatriates' social capital needs during an assignment, and how do these needs change over time?*

2. *How does the extent these needs are met relate to expatriate success criteria?*

1.3 Study Context

The study context is multinational firms in the Ålesund region in Norway. To ensure anonymity of the respondents, only limited information about the organizations is provided in this study. The study context is a homogenous area, meaning that all respondents live in a similar context. This reduces contextual noise and variation in the data.

The Confederation of Norwegian Enterprise (NHO) estimates that Norway currently needs approximately 35.500 more workers within fields including engineering, technology, construction, and others (Rørstad et al., 2022). The need for workers is expected to increase as the number of pensioners will exceed the number of newly available workers in the future. From a regional point of view, 72% of the organizations in the county of Møre and Romsdal state they lack the right competence in a recent survey by NHO (Rørstad et al., 2022). Since there is not enough local labor available, organizations must attract and manage to retain international competence in the region to close the competence gaps and foster innovation.

1.4 Structure of the thesis

Table 1. *Structure of the thesis*

Chapter 1 **Introduction**	In the first chapter, I present the background and relevance of the research, along with the purpose of the study and research questions.
Chapter 2 **Theoretical background and framework of the study**	The second chapter provides the theoretical background for the thesis. The aims are to present a review of relevant literature on the topics of expatriates and outline the theoretical framework used for data collection and analysis.
Chapter 3 **Methodology**	The third chapter presents the methodology, including research philosophy, research design, and methods, along with a critical discussion of research quality.
Chapter 4 **Data analysis**	This chapter presents an explanation of how the semi-structured interviews were analyzed. Further, the explanation of how the egocentric networks were analyzed.
Chapter 5 **Findings and discussion**	The fifth chapter presents the empirical findings and discusses the findings with the theoretical framework and extant literature.

Chapter 6

Conclusion

In the final chapter, I present the main findings and answer the research questions. Further, I present the practical and theoretical implications, limitations of the study, and suggestions for further research.

Chapter 2. Theoretical Background and Framework of the Study

In this chapter, I aim to outline the theoretical framework used for data collection and analysis and present a review of relevant literature on the investigated topics.

This chapter consists of the following sections: first, the establishment of definitions of expatriates and expatriate success criteria. Further follows the theoretical framework used for data collection and analysis, and a review of relevant literature.

2.1 Definition of Expatriates

The term 'expatriate' is often used in the international experience literature, and there is enormous empirical literature on expatriates (McNulty & Brewster, 2017). Historically, the common understanding of the term 'expatriate' has been someone moving beyond country borders for a limited time. In expatriate literature, this has often included international work and non-work experience, student exchanges, short trips abroad, and backpackers working to fund further travel resulting in an imprecise use of the term in research. To construct clarity as to what is meant by 'expatriate' in this thesis, the four boundary conditions of the term 'business expatriate' introduced by McNulty and Brewster (2017) are applied: (1) The expatriate must engage in international geographical mobility; (2) the expatriate must have legal employment; (3) with organizations and business; (4) in a country where they do not hold citizenship. McNulty and Brewster (2017, p. 32) define a business expatriate as *"legally working individuals who reside temporarily in a country of which they are not a citizen in order to accomplish a career-related goal, being relocated abroad either by an organization, by self-initiation or directly employed within the host country."*

2.2 Expatriate Success Criteria

Past research on expatriate success indicates a variation in the criteria used to evaluate how successful expatriate assignments have been (van der Laken et al., 2019). Traditionally, assignments were considered successful if the expatriate stayed for the proposed duration of the assignment (e.g., Tung, 1987). Black et al.' (1991) seminal paper on cross-cultural adjustment was the start of a new dominant criterion for expatriate success. For a long time,

adjustment, performance, and assignment completion were regarded as interchangeable measures of expatriate success, but scholars have proposed that they represent unique aspects that need to be studied separately (Harrison & Shaffer, 2005; Lazarova & Thomas, 2012). Most studies focus on success criteria such as adjustment, commitment, retention (Ren et al., 2014), and performance (Fee & Gray, 2020). However, in this thesis, the success criteria are defined as psychological well-being, social well-being, and job satisfaction as illustrated in figure 1. The logic of this choice is to examine more proximal determinants of expatriate success, as each of these three measures a distinct facet of expatriates' potential response to social support. Further, if the expatriates experience high psychological well-being, social well-being, and job satisfaction, it will contribute to higher levels of more distal determinants such as adjustment and performance.

2.2.1 *Psychological Well-being*

Psychological well-being is the positive psychological functioning of individuals (Ryff & Keyes, 1995). Garcia et al. (2014) defined psychological well-being as the ability to deal with environmental changes. Psychological well-being concerns self-acceptance, positive relations, autonomy, environmental mastery, purpose in life, and personal growth. Psychological well-being is one of the success criteria because with positive psychological functioning and active social interactions, the expatriate is better equipped to minimize or avoid hurdles caused by external factors creating stress and thus be able to handle the relocation process better (Wang & Kanungo, 2004).

2.2.2 *Social Well-being*

Social well-being is *"the appraisal of one's circumstances and functioning in society"* (Keyes, 1998, p. 122). Keyes (1998) found a strong association between prosocial community involvement and higher of prosocial community involvement and higher social well-being. Social well-being is closely related to psychological well-being. However, they are seen as multiple outcomes in this study as there are nuances from psychological to social. Where psychological well-being involves the individual's mental state, social well-being involves reactions to situations in the individual's circumstances.

2.2.3 *Job Satisfaction*

Job satisfaction represents a combination of workers' positive or negative feelings towards their work and the extent to which expectations are met. According to the disconfirmation theory, employees compare their job performance and the expectations for the job and evaluate their jobs positively or negatively (Lee et al., 2015). Therefore, if the performance is perceived to be greater than what is expected, the employees are satisfied. If the expectation is greater than the performance, they are dissatisfied (Matzler et al., 2004). Factors directly affecting job satisfaction can be classified into two categories: (1) factors pertaining the relationship between an organization and its employees, such as salary, management environment, and career opportunities (Rayton, 2006), and (2) factors among employees, such as relationships with colleagues and supervisors. In this thesis, job satisfaction is limited to whether the candidates evaluate their jobs positively or negatively.

Figure 1. *Expatriate success criteria*
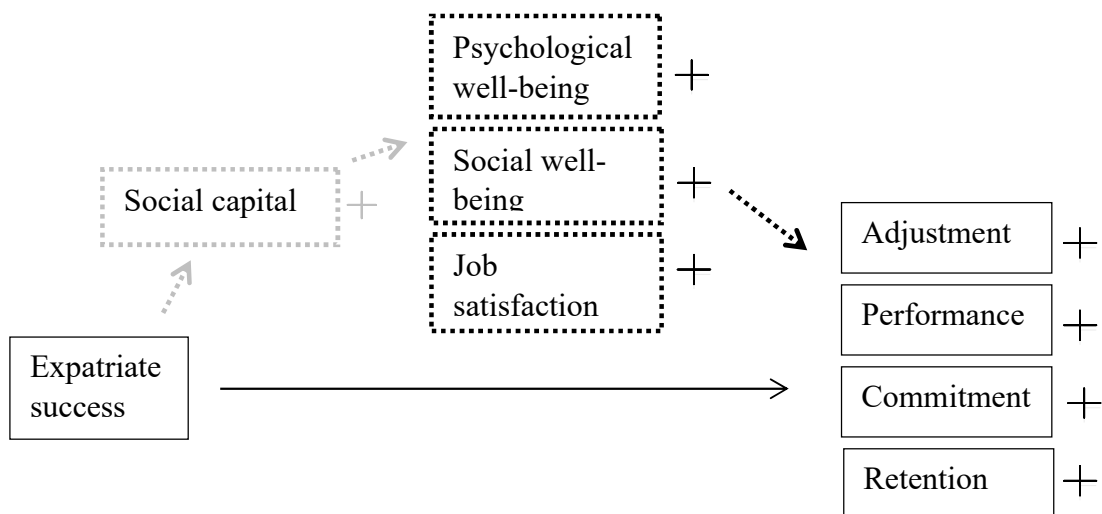
To sum up, the thesis's framework for expatriate success criteria measures distinct facets of expatriates' potential response to social support. Social support, a branch of social capital theory, is documented to be a powerful influence in the occurrence of and recovery from life problems (Thoits, 2011), as the relocation process is a stressful event for expatriates. Having access to social support potentially leads to higher levels of psychological well-being, social well-being, and job satisfaction which again affects adjustment,

performance, commitment, and retention. The next chapters present social capital theory, social support, and social networks.

2.3 Social Capital Theory

Social capital is widely used and debated in literature from anthropology to economics. As a result, multiple definitions, conceptual approaches, and ways of operationalizing exist in the literature. Social capital includes the obligations that people who are connected may feel toward each other, the sense of solidarity they may call upon, the information they are willing to share, and the services they are willing to perform (Small, 2009). People who are socially connected therefore have resources to a stock of 'capital' they can employ when needed.

One of the pioneers in the social capital literature, Bourdieu (1986, p. 248), defines social capital as *"the aggregate of the actual or potential resources which are linked to possession of a durable network of more or less institutionalized relationships of mutual acquaintance and recognition."* In other words, the resource one derives from the network. Bourdieu's approach is different from other conceptualizations of social capital with regards to treatment of power. Bourdieu means that social capital is linked to the reproduction of class, status, and power relations. This differs from the other conceptualizations of social capital that either treat it as a universal resource or something available for anyone who invests in its creation.

Coleman (1990) defines social capital as the obligations, norms, and information available to a person from her or his network. Coleman aimed to develop a model of social behavior that was both sociologically compelling and rooted in the idea that actors are rational. Coleman saw social capital as a public good where the actions of individuals benefit the whole. From Coleman's point of view, individuals engage in social interactions, relationships, and networks as long as the benefits persists.

Lin (2001a, p. 29) defines social capital in a somewhat different way as *"the resources embedded in a social structure that are accessed and/or mobilized in purposive ways."* Lin's objective was to synthesize earlier theorists' work and formally fit the theory into social network analysis. Lin argued that four types of resources constitute social capital: information, the influence that networks have over people, the social credentials that networks can impart, and the personal reinforcements essential for mental health that networks provide actors (Lin, 1999a). While the three authors mentioned above differed in the specific resources they included under the rubric of social capital, they all agreed that social capital refers to resources people derive directly from their social ties.

This thesis adopts the conceptualization of social capital as presented by Lin – that social capital is the resources that exist in social networks that are accessed and/or mobilized in purposive ways. Social support is a potential function of a tie between two actors within a network, which can add to a person's social capital, whereas social capital is the accumulative resources embedded within social networks and individuals need to engage with others within a network to be able to capitalize on potential social capital (Lin, 1999a). Drawing on social capital theory, expatriates will reach valuable resources and information through their social networks which again facilitate the success criteria. In the next chapter, I elaborate on social support and social networks.

2.4 Social Support and Social networks

Social support is a branch of social capital theory, and is the perceived or actual instrumental and/or expressive provisions supplied by the community, social networks, and confiding partners (Lin et al., 2013). Thoits (1995) states that social support has been documented to be a powerful influence, for example, in the occurrence of and recovery from life problems. As mentioned previously, taking on an international assignment abroad can be a significant challenge for the expatriate on the individual level. Research shows that social support can provide newly arrived expatriates with information about what behaviors are acceptable or unacceptable in the new cultural and organizational setting, thus, facilitating cultural adjustment by reducing uncertainty (Shaffer et al., 1999). Such social support is

shown a positive predictor of expatriate adjustment (Shaffer et al., 1999), performance, retention and commitment (van der Laken et al., 2019).

Scholars often conceptualize four types of social support; instrumental, informational, emotional, and appraisal (House, 1981). *Instrumental support* is ties that provide resources, money, or assistance. Instrumental support can be someone lending a tool or sports equipment. *Emotional support* is ties that offer love or nurturing (Thoits, 1995). An example of emotional support is helping others cope with emotions and experiences in a verbal or non-verbal way. This can be a hug or offering genuine encouragement and reassurance. *Informational support* is ties that provide assistance, advice, and information (House et al., 1985). Appraisal support provides affirmation, feedback, and self-evaluation. *Appraisal support* can be information about what behaviors are acceptable or unacceptable in a new culture. Different types of support can be provided by different actors in the social network, as further explained in the next paragraphs about social networks.

Social networks are the "structures of relationships linking social actors" (Marsden, 2002, p. 2727). Underpinning network science is the assumption that individuals are embedded in social relations and interactions (Borgatti et al., 2009; Lewis, 2011). As mentioned, several studies show that as part of the adjustment process at the new location, expatriates seek social support from their social networks to decrease the stress caused by the uncertainty inherent to the relocation experience (Albrecht & Adelman, 1984; Kraimer et al., 2001; Liu & Shaffer, 2005). While many scholars have referred to the likelihood of different types of support coming from different social actors in social networks (van der Laken et al., 2019), they did not systematically analyze the similarities and differences in the types of support across different groups in the social networks. According to Agneessens et al. (2006), since different types of alters in a network may provide different resources, what type of support is provided by which alters is one complexity of social support that deserves attention.

Expatriates engage in social interactions in different domains of the network with various supportive agents in each. The *family domain* consists of the family member of the

expatriate such as spouse, kids, and extended family (e.g., elderly care for parents). Not only the expatriate's own well-being and adaption is crucial for expatriate success. Spouses and family members, whose inability to adjust to foreign environments have been noted as one of the most critical reasons for expatriate failure (Hays, 1971). Not all expatriates bring their family abroad, leading to a physical split of the family. International assignments entail critical changes both for expatriates themselves and family members who accompany them, placing heavy demands on their time and resources (Takeuchi, 2010).

In the *community domain*, also called the host country domain, daily interactions with friends, acquaintances, or general community members may hold emotional value and provide opportunities to learn cultural behaviors and habits (Caligiuri, 2017). The support from host-country nationals (HCNs), compatriots and third-country nationals can be instrumental in expatriates succeeding in their objectives (Bhaskar-Shrinivas et al., 2005; Toh & DeNisi, 2007) or whose resistance can lead to "failure" (Toh & Denisi, 2003). While expatriates can develop close ties with HCNs in the new network, the bonds with friends outside of work are often deeper and more personal to the expatriate (Pahl, 2000). Individuals the expatriate has strong ties with, such as friends, provide particularly more and better emotional and appraisal support than others (Shen & Kram, 2011). Furthermore, these actors also provide more information and advice (Mäkelä & Suutari, 2009; Reiche, 2012; Reiche et al., 2009).

At *work*, the supportive agents are often supervisors, peers, direct reports, and coworkers providing tangible aid, helping with daily work tasks and socialization processes (Chiaburu & Harrison, 2008) and whose support can increase expatriates' adjustment levels and subsequent performance (Wang & Takeuchi, 2007). Generally, coworker social support seems to be positively related to expatriate adjustment. However, the referent of coworkers support has not always been specified in earlier research – whether the coworker providing support it is another expatriate, host country nationals (HCNs), or third-country nationals (Shaffer et al., 1999; van der Laken et al., 2019). An exception is a recent diary study by Bayraktar (2019) who separated the supportive actors into home country nationals, host country nationals, compatriots, and third country nationals.

2.5 Organizational Support

Organizational support theory supposes that employees infer the extent to which the organization cares about their well-being through various policies, practices, and treatment. Employees then reciprocate the received support with increased loyalty and performance (Rhoades & Eisenberger, 2002). To support expatriates, organizations implement practices to assist, motivate, and take care of the expatriate, including logistical services, extensive remuneration packages and cross-cultural training (Guzzo et al., 1994). A meta-analysis conducted by (van der Laken et al., 2019) found organizational support to be of primary importance for all four criteria of expatriate success in their analysis; adjustment, performance, commitment, and retention. Particularly expatriates' commitment to their assignment was strongly related to their overall perception of organizational support. The results from this analysis underline the criticality of perceived organizational support to ensure expatriate success (van der Laken et al., 2019). I explore organizational support in this thesis because it is a potential predictor of expatiate success.

2.6 Met Expectations Theory

The theory of met expectations is the discrepancy between what a person encounters on the job through of positive and negative experiences and what he expects to encounter (Porter & Steers, 1973). According to a meta-analysis by Wanous et al. (1992) the effects of *met expectations* for newcomers to organizations correlated with job satisfaction, commitment, and retention. However, this correlation has later been shown to only modest support for the hypothesis used in the study due to methodological issues with the original study. Various stage models of organizational socialization assume that unmet expectations cause a variety of post-entry adjustment problems such as poor performance and early resignation (Caligiuri et al., 2001; Van Maanen & Schein, 1977). Caligiuri et al. (2001) found that met expectations of expatriates positively affected overall adjustment in the host country. The outcome of whether expectations are met can affect the expatriate success criteria in respectively positive and negative ways and is therefore included in the theoretical framework of this study.

2.7 The Need to Belong Theory

The need to belong is a powerful, fundamental, and extremely pervasive motivation (Baumeister & Leary, 2017). According to the need to belong theory, humans need frequent, affectively pleasant interactions with a few other people. Second, these interactions must take place in the context of a temporally stable and enduring framework of affective concern for each other's well-being (Baumeister & Leary, 1995). People have a pervasive drive to form and maintain at least a minimum quantity of lasting, positive, and significant relationships characterized with affective concern of each other's welfare. The outcome of having this need met is significant. A lack of belongingness can cause severe deprivation and loneliness, which can cause variou ill effects on health, adjustment and well-being such as depression, suicidal thoughts, and criminal behavior (Baumeister & Leary, 1995). I include the need to belong theory in the theoretical framework as the need to belong affects the success criteria.

2.8 The Role of Time

Previously, there have been multiple contributions to research on expatriate adjustment, social support, and expatriate success (van der Laken et al., 2019). However, there is a lack of research on the role of time in expatriate literature (Hippler et al., 2015). While we know much about how expatriates adjust and perform, we know little about how these processes unfold through a dynamic perspective.

The passage of time is inseparable from the human experience, and theories and methodological approaches that ignore temporal dynamics thus fail to grasp the reality of human experience (Hippler et al., 2015). The role of time in expatriate management is important because most organizations have limited resources to spend on supporting employees. Having insights about when to support expatriates most effectively is of high value. The expatriate adjustment has been argued to follow a U-shaped curve, unfolding over time (Black et al., 1991; Torbiörn, 1982). This U-curve starts with a 'honeymoon stage' right after relocating, followed by a 'cultural shock stage' where the expatriate faces the challenges of living in a foreign country. After a period of struggle with these challenges, adjustment increases and reaches a stage of mastery. The lowest point of the 'culture shock stage' is according to this model three months in the host country. On the other hand, findings of

Bhaskar-Shrinivas et al. (2005) indicate that the 'honeymoon stage' may last for 12 months and the 'culture shock' stage does not reach its lowest point before about three years into the assignment. If organizations want to support the expatriate at the lowest point, these contradictory findings give organizations little advice on when to offer support. Therefore, research that explores temporal aspects in expatriate management is important.

Chapter 3. Methodology

In this chapter, I explain and specify the research philosophy, design, and methods choices. Furthermore, I present the sample, data collection, and ethical considerations. The section ends with a critical evaluation of the quality of the research.

3.1 Research Philosophy

I consider a subjectivist research philosophy to explore the research questions. As Saunders et al. (2019) describes, subjectivism is a research philosophy according to which social reality results from the perceptions and consequent actions of social actors. Further, the social constructionism view states that "*reality is constructed through social interaction in which social actors create partially shared meanings and realities; in other words, the reality is constructed intersubjectively*" (Saunders et al., 2019, p. 137).

The research paradigm of the study is interpretivism, defined as "*creating new, richer understandings and interpretations of social worlds and contexts*" (Saunders et al., 2019, p. 149). Interpretivist researchers try to discover realities by being inside the participant world, knowing and interpreting their opinion about social reality, followed by meaning-making. Interpretivism views that people belong to different cultural settings, their situations could vary according to the time, and people interpret a social event according to their understanding and experience. The focus is to gain insights on a topic by collecting different subjective views from the expatriates interviewed in the center.

3.2 Research Design and Approach

The research design is a framework that will help efficiently conduct research, given the methodological fit. The methodological fit comprises an overarching criterion to ensure the quality of the research conducted (Edmondson & McManus, 2007). Methodological fit refers to internal consistency among elements of a research project – the research questions, prior work, research design and theoretical contribution. In other words, the research design must be internally compatible with the research questions and the purpose of the study

(Edmondson & McManus, 2007). The research design includes the link between the research question, the data to be collected, and the strategies for analyzing the data (Bryman & Bell, 2018).

The most common qualitative research designs are exploratory, descriptive, and causal/explanatory (Saunders et al., 2019). In this thesis, the aims are to explore the social capital needs of expatriates, the role of time in expatriate adjustment, and how the extent of having needs met is related to success criteria. To provide an answer to this, representing the overarching research questions of this thesis, I apply a qualitative exploratory design. This research approach generates an in-depth, multi-faceted understanding of complex issues in a real-life context. Exploratory research design intends to get new insights into a problem and is appropriate when there is a small amount of previous knowledge on the research problem (Creswell & Creswell, 2003). Previously, there have been multiple contributions to research on expatriate adjustment, social support, and expatriate success, but little prior knowledge about how expatriates view and value different types of support and the temporal aspects of needs (Hippler et al., 2015; van der Laken et al., 2019).

Additionally, it is important to consider which research approach is more applicable. The research approach is a general plan and procedure for conducting the study and is often divided into two main approaches: inductive and deductive reasoning. The deductive approach is used when existing theories need to be tested and verified. On the other hand, the inductive approach focuses on collecting and analyzing available empirical theory (Bell et al., 2022). The inductive approach applies when the aim is to better understand a problem and its influencing factors and develop new theories. The inductive approach is relevant because there is a lack of research on the role of time in expatriate adjustment and little prior knowledge about how expatriates view and value different types of support over time.

However, during the research process, it has been necessary to move back and forth between theory and data, and further, between initial findings and a second data collection, which classifies as an abductive approach. According to Charmaz (2016), abduction reflects the process of inferencing and double-checking these inferences with more data.

Furthermore, before designing the interview guide, I read theory to build an understanding of previous research fronts. Despite this, the research problems evolved from the empirical data. Since I used a combination of inductive and abductive approaches, the design classifies as systematic combining (Dubois & Gadde, 2014). This approach is a process where one moves back and forth between empirical observations and theory, where the theoretical frameworks, empirical fieldwork, and analysis evolve together. This approach allows for thorough interpretations of different aspects related to each other, like the empirical data, which describes reality, available theory, the evolvement of the case, and the analytical framework. During the process, one can develop the case based on empirical fieldwork and interpretations, which further gives implications for data searches and leads to customizing the theoretical frameworks (Dubois & Gadde, 2014). This approach is highly relevant as moving back and forth between theory, and the empirical findings, have shaped this research to evolve over time resulting in more specific research problems and conclusions. In other words, writing this thesis has been a highly iterative process.

3.3 Research Methods

Qualitative research methods are applicable as there is little prior knowledge about how expatriates view and value different types of support over time. Therefore, the in-depth insights one can gain from qualitative research methods suit this research. Yin (2011) explains five important features of qualitative methods: (1) the studying of an individual's life in real-world conditions, (2) a participant's perspective or viewpoint on different topics, (3) the study of different contextual conditions, (4) contribution to understanding and explaining human social behavior, (5) the possibility of using multiple sources of evidence rather than one. A qualitative method supports the choice of an inductive and abductive approach as it allows the researcher to develop a level of detail since one can be highly involved in the processes conducted (Williams, 2007). Qualitative methods include interviews, focus groups, participant observation, ethnographic studies, and surveys, to mention some (Kvale & Brinkmann, 2017). I chose semi-structured interviews to obtain the information needed from the participants to answer the research questions.

3.3.1 *Semi-structured Interviews*

The method I applied in the first part of the interviews was semi-structured interviews. In semi-structured interviews, the informants have freedom in their responses because the open-ended questions allow for unique replies. This technique gives the informants freedom to respond while the researcher controls the interview flow (Kvale & Brinkmann, 2017). This control must be subtle to keep the conversational tone between the informant and the interviewer. This control allows the interviewer to steer the conversation in the direction that is needed and ask for clarification and more information if necessary. The questions in the interview guide were standardized for all the informants. However, I customized follow-up questions for the informants throughout the interview, which is classified as semi-structured interviews (Kvale & Brinkmann, 2017). I chose semi-structured interviews to get insights into how the social support of expatriates influences factors such as job satisfaction, psychological well-being, and social life.

3.3.2 *Name Generator and Interpreter for Collecting Network Data*

In the second part of the interviews, I used a name generator and interpreter (NGI) with the objective of collecting the ego network data of the candidates. In relation to the research questions, this method measures the social capital the expatriates have access to in their emerging networks. As previous research on expatriates' social capital often has used general measures of social capital, this method allows for a specific measure as the questions asked to target all aspects of social support mentioned in the theoretical framework – emotional, appraisal, informational, and instrumental support.

There are various methods for eliciting alters in egocentric networks. The three most frequently used methods are the resource generator, the position generator, and the name generator/interpreter. The resource generator is based on questions about access to a number of resources, which cover 'general' social capital in a population (Van Der Gaag & Snijders, 2005). A problem with the resource generator is that it specifies the relevant resources, which vary depending on the situation and individual needs, making it context-specific. Another method is the position generator, developed by Lin (Lin & Dumin, 1986). The position generator aims to measure social capital accessible through the occupations of network

members. Compared to the name generator/interpreter, it is a more restrictive approach; researchers question the utility of position generators for measuring social capital that provides expressive benefits such as the influence of emotional support on well-being (House, 1981). The name generator/interpreter is the most frequently used and best-understood method (Bidart & Charbonneau, 2011). However, it is not without flaws. Critics of the name generator and interpreter are the high level of burden both for the interviewer and respondent. An advantage of the name generator/interpreter is its flexibility to identify and produce data about each alter in a network. Since the name generator/interpreter can assess the availability of instrumental, emotional, and informational exchange in a network, I chose the name generator/interpreter tool to elicit alters from expatriates' social networks in this thesis.

A name generator is a set of questions that is designed to elicit members of an ego network (Perry et al., 2018). Two essential components of network data collection using a name generator approach is: (1) a question or series of questions designed to elicit the names of network members, called "name generators," and (2) a series of questions asked about each alter identified by name, called "name interpreters." The name generator approach is conducive to collecting very detailed information about social networks. Name generators and interpreters are used to identify and produce data about each individual alter.

In part because name generators are so flexible, there is little consensus about the best name generators for eliciting members of ego networks, and hundreds of name generators appear in diverse academic literature, from business and marketing to anthropology (Perry et al., 2018). Rather, there are different basic strategies for obtaining alters, all of which have trade-offs, especially between accuracy, flexibility/specificity, range, and efficiency. The different strategies for obtaining alters are: exchange-based name generators; which elicit ties that provide access to particular resources or fulfill specific functions (Marin & Hampton, 2007), content-based name generators; which elicit ties that have particular characteristics. Affection-based name generators; elicit ties to which the respondent is close or have a strong attachment. Interaction-based name generators; which elicit ties based on interaction to measure sociability (Bidart & Charbonneau, 2011). The choice of name generator is the most important methodological decision in studying ego networks. The name generators must

reflect the social processes that are theorized to underlie social influence or social capital (Perry et al., 2018). A question I asked when deciding which name generators to use was; *do the network measures capture what is intended?* I chose to apply a multiple name generator approach to be able to answer the research questions in this thesis.

3.3.3 *Multiple Name Generator approach*

A multiple name generator approach provides the opportunity to understand tie activation, who is called on for support and advice, and for which kinds of tasks or problems. Further, this gives insight into multiplexity - the different roles that alters fill and the numerous simultaneous ways people are connected. I designed the questions to cover emotional, instrumental, informational and appraisal support. Further, the questions also capture whom the respondents socialize with in their free time. In table 2, the questions from the name generator and the following logic of design are listed.

Table 2. *Questions from the NGI activity*

Name Generator and Interpreter	Theory
1. In the past three weeks, who have you had a meaningful interaction with? *By meaningful, I mean non-superficial, such as you might have with a store clerk or a brief conversation with a neighbor you hardly know. A conversation with someone at the lunch table or a like on Facebook does not count as a meaningful interaction.* This interaction can be in person, by telephone, or by social media.	Interaction-based name generator Socialization
2. In the past two weeks, who have you gone to for advice at work? 3. Has anyone started to come to you for advice yet?	Exchange-based name generator Advice
4. At work, whom do you ask if you need suggestions about what you could do here in Ålesund or other local insights?	Exchange-based name generator Information
5. Who are the people you socialize with in your free time?	Exchange-based Socialization

6. Whom do you ask for advice? *For instance, with regards to relocating or personal issues, etc.*	Exchange-based Advice non-work
7. Suppose you need to borrow some small things like a tool, sports equipment, or something similar. From whom outside your household would you ask to borrow from?	Exchange-based Instrumental support
8. And similarly, is there anyone who comes to you for the same reasons?	Instrumental support
9. Imagine you experience something good, whom do you share that joy or excitement with?	Affect-based Emotional support
10. And if you experience something bad, whom do you share that with?	
11. If you wonder how things are done around here, or if you are behaving appropriately, who would you ask?	Appraisal support

One of the considerations taken in the design phase was question-order effects (Shuman & Presser, 1981). The location of name generators in an interview influences which alters that are named. Pustejovsky and Spillane (2009) found that the number of alters listed in response to the first name generator effectively created a ceiling, reducing the number of names elicited by the questions following. I chose the first question to be an interaction-based name generator which defines networks based interaction and is designed to measure the level of sociability (Bidart & Charbonneau, 2011). The range of interaction-based name generators is high. However, the interaction-based name generator has been criticized because it is not clear what kinds of alters are being elicited. The logic of using an interaction-based name generator first was to yield more alters earlier in the instrument to avoid satisficing. Further, since I use a multiple name generator approach, the following questions are designed to be more specific to capture different types of social support. Furthermore, a time limit was set for some of the questions to reduce respondent burden. As the network measure intended to capture the social support the expatriates have available during the relocation process; it was appropriate to set a time limit to 'the last three weeks' to capture more recent interactions.

The second question is content based. Content-based name generators elicit ties that have particular characteristics. In this case, the colleagues of the expatriates. As the study context is international organizations, it was appropriate to investigate the support from colleagues. The logic was asking questions to capture support from the work domain and other domains. Therefore, I asked questions about advice at work and non-work to capture different support providers in different contexts.

Exchange-based name generators elicit ties that provide access to particular resources or fulfill specific functions (Perry et al., 2018). Exchange-based name generators can be employed to operationalize social capital and social support. When choosing to use exchange-based name generators, it is advantageous to use multiple questions that reference various specific functions or support resources. The exchange-based name generators provide insights to access to instrumental support (e.g., Suppose you need to borrow some small things like a tool, sports equipment, or something similar. From whom outside your household would you ask to borrow from?) and informational support (e.g., advice at work, advice in general and suggestions) and appraisal support (e.g., If you wonder how things are done around here, or if you are behaving appropriately, whom would you ask?)

Affect-based name generators are suitable for eliciting to whom egos are close or have a solid attachment (Perry et al., 2018). These types of alters are often the most influential. Intimate ties contribute to a respondent's self-esteem, mastery, and sense of belonging and are often linked to measures of well-being (Hammer, 1983; Thoits, 2011). Affect-based name generators were chosen to elicit alters providing emotional support (e.g., Imagine you experience something good, whom do you share that joy or excitement with? And if you experience something bad, whom do you share that with?).

3.3.4 *Issues of Validity and Reliability in Name Generators*

Name generators elicit a sample of network members that fit a respondent's interpretation of the questions asked (Hammer, 1984). The samples collected are likely not representative of the network as a whole (Brewer, 2000). The most problematic threats to validity and reliability associated with name generators are recall errors and forgetting,

saliency, network structures, order effects, interviewer effects, and question-order effects (Perry et al., 2018).

Recalling members of one's network is a challenging cognitive task; therefore, forgetting to mention members of the network is a pervasive and nontrivial problem in name generators (Perry et al., 2018). People are more likely to remember the names of more meaningful people or people who are linked in memory to other alters they have already named. In an attempt to sort this issue, I told respondents before the task that it could be an advantage to think through the different contexts in life when thinking of whom to name - for example, family, work, friends, education, and hobbies (Bidart & Charbonneau, 2011).

There seems to be a bias toward naming more salient alters (Brewer, 2000). Presser et al. (2004) found that alters with whom respondents felt closer and had known longer were significantly more likely to be remembered. Further, respondents are more likely to name people highly embedded in the network. Issues with order effects are that objects linked in memory often tend to be recalled together. In the name generator used for this task, there is no limit placed on the number of names a respondent can list to solve this issue.

Another issue with the name generator is that different people interpret the name generator in different ways. One example is the GSS (Burt, 1984), where respondents were asked to name people they discussed "important matters with." Everyone has a different perception of what is an important matter. The respondents can also perceive the questions differently than intended for this task. For instance, each respondent will perceive the "meaningful interaction" differently. To solve this, I tried to add more context by saying that "…*by meaningful, I mean non-superficial, such as you might have with a store clerk or a brief conversation with a neighbor you hardly know. A conversation with someone at the lunch table or a like on Facebook does not count as a meaningful interaction.*"

Furthermore, another limitation can be the interviewer effect. The NGI approach to collecting network data is time-intensive and burdensome for the interviewer and the

participant. If the interviewer seems unengaged or bored, this might discourage the participant from adding more names (Perry et al., 2018). When conducting the interviews, the focus was to present the activity of the NGI as an exciting activity and provide instructions whenever the participant needed it. The NGI was tested multiple times in advance to adjust the instructions.

3.3.5 *Network Canvas*

I used a tablet with Network Canvas Interviewer software (Complex Data Collective, 2016b) to collect personal network data. First, I built a protocol for the name generator and interpreter based on the interview guide in the software Network Canvas Architect (Complex Data Collective, 2016a) and transferred it to a tablet. The order of questions aligned with the interview guide. It is possible to use paper and pen to do this activity, but since all respondents are business professionals, I found it more appropriate to use a tablet.

3.4 Sampling

I applied purposive sampling in this research. Purposive sampling is a technique where candidates are selected because they have the characteristics the researcher needs to answer the research questions (Lee & Lings, 2008). I sampled expatriates purposively based on sample criteria to collect relevant data to answer the research questions. In one case, I applied snowball sampling as one candidate put me in contact with another candidate. The sample criteria for candidates were business expatriates who had arrived in Norway within the last 12 months. However, while conducting data analysis, I needed richer data on expatriates who had stayed longer than 12 months, and the sample criteria was expanded to 36 months, followed by a second data collection. Purposive sampling was used in this occasion as well.

The HR department of two multinational organizations in Ålesund provided contact information to international employees who met the criteria. In the case of snowball sampling, the respondent works in a third organization in Ålesund. I invited 17 expatriates to participate in the study by e-mail or telephone, and 10 accepted the invitation. Eight of the

respondents are OEs stationed in Ålesund from different branches in other parts of the world. Two respondents are SIEs who moved to Ålesund on their initiative and have since got employed in international organizations in the area. All respondents are business professionals with higher education. Table 3 below presents an overview of the respondents' gender, age, continent, duration of stay, and interview duration. Since a preponderance of the sample work in the same multinational organization, specific information about age, nationality, and duration of stay is collected but not presented to ensure the anonymity of the respondents.

Table 3.

Overview of respondents, gender, age, continent, duration of stay and interview duration.

Respondent	Gender	Age	Continent	Duration of stay	Interview duration
1	Male	20-29	Europe	6-12 months	31:27 min
2	Male	30-39	Asia	0-6 months	40:02 min
3	Male	30-39	Europe	6-12 months	30:03 min
4	Male	30-39	Europe	6-12 months	46:01 min
5	Male	40-49	Europe	0-6 months	40:58 min
6	Female	30-39	Europe	12+ months	58:55 min
7	Female	40-49	Europe	0-6 months	45:30 min
8	Male	20-29	Asia	0-6 months	50:00 min
9	Male	20-29	Europe	12+ months	87:26 min
10	Male	20-29	Asia	12+ months	61:51 min

3.5 Data Collection

I collected data in two stages. The first data collection was conducted in May 2022, when I interviewed eight expatriates. While conducting data analysis, it became clear that I

needed more data from expatriates who had stayed in the area for 12-36 months. One of the initial eight interviewees had stayed a few months longer than 12 months but was included in the study to add richness to the data. This candidate stated different social capital needs than the others, and a pattern of groups with different needs based on time of stay emerged. However, data from only one candidate in the group of 12+ months was insufficient to conclude such a pattern, and I decided that more data was needed. A second data collection was conducted in October 2022 where I interviewed two more expatriates who had stayed in the area for 12-36 months to secure enough data to sufficiently answer the research questions. After the last data collection, three groups had three or more candidates based on time of stay. I decided three or more candidates for each group to be the right amount to ensure a certain breadth of opinion and experience and have the possibility of triangulation (Myers, 2019) to state similarities and differences across the sample correctly.

I conducted face-to-face interviews in the respondents' workplaces in five locations in the Ålesund region. The interviews lasted between 30 and 87 minutes. The reason for coming to the expatriate's workplace was to be in familiar surroundings, making it more comfortable and convenient for the respondent. All interviews were held in meeting rooms at the respective offices, primarily booked in advance by the respondents and on one occasion by the receptionist. A formal information letter about the study was sent to all respondents in advance, as shown in Appendix 2. Further, the information letter was also given to the respondent in paper form at the very start of the interview. Furthermore, the respondents were verbally reminded of their rights, confidentiality of personal information, and data storage and informed about the audio recording of the interview. When handling personal data, the NSD (Data Protection Services) must assess that the processing of personal data is in accordance with data protection legislation. See approval from NSD in Appendix 3. All respondents signed a consent form to confirm that they approved the audio recording of the interview, and data were informed about how the data would be processed and stored until the end of the project.

I used a tablet with the software Network Canvas Interviewer (Complex Data Collective, 2016b) to collect personal network data. The Network Canvas software collects ego-nets by the set of name generators and interpreters from the interview-guide. By the end

of the activity, the respondent had made his or her network. I placed the name generator task at the end of the interview with intention, as seeing their network could affect the answers if the interview order were the opposite. I thoroughly explained the exercise to the respondents, and respondents could ask questions at any time if unsure. The complete interview guide is available in attachment 1.

All interviews were recorded to transcribe the interviews on the same or the following day. After each interview, I wrote detailed reflection notes from the interviews. The focus when writing the reflection notes was to write down what the recorder cannot capture, such as descriptions of the location, the body language of the respondent, thoughts, and improvements for the following interviews. Further, I noted and reflected upon key points from the interviews. I made one adjustment to the interview guide after the first interview. The first respondent answered the last question, "In general, how happy would you say you are with your life here?" and this respondent ended his answer by adding, "on a scale from 1-10, I would sum up and say…". This gave me the idea to add "on a scale from 1-10" in the subsequent interviews to have basis for comparison in analysis.

3.6 Ethical Considerations

Ethics in the context of research refers to the standards of behavior for those who are object to or influenced by the research (Saunders et al., 2019). Ethical considerations are important in the social sciences as the research delves into the lives of other people (Berg & Lune, 2012). I took several measures to ensure the interviewees' identity is protected. Since the research method applied in this study required the respondents to share personal information, it was necessary to consider how much background information to share about each respondent to secure anonymity. Based on these considerations, only limited background information about each respondent is provided in this thesis even though more information is collected. For example, I am not providing information about the employer, job position, exact age, and nationality in this text. When I transcribed the interviews, all information that can directly identify the candidate or the employer was generalized. For example, the name of the respondent was generalized by substituting the name with "C1",

"C2" etc. Further, the employer was generalized by substituting the name with "name of company" in the text.

In the interviews, I verbally reminded all respondents of privacy, rights, and audio recording at the start of the interviews. In addition, I gave a copy of the information letter in paper form that they also received by e-mail prior to the interview. In this way, they could read it if they had not opened the attachment in the e-mail. I reminded respondents clearly about the purpose of the interviews and how the information would be stored, processed, and used. I informed the respondents that they at all times could withdraw from the study or get access to the data collected to review or delete the data.

Furthermore, the Network Canvas activity collects data about alters in the expatriates' network, in other words, third parties. To solve the issue of third-party privacy, I asked the respondents to use nicknames or initials instead of real names. Moreover, in data analysis, all alters are given numerical codes.

3.7 Evaluation of Methodology

In this section, I review the choices regarding the thesis' quality based on Guba & Lincoln's (1989) four criteria of trustworthiness: credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability of research.

Credibility refers to how critical readers can trust this research and are congruent with reality (Bryman & Bell, 2011). Triangulation is "*the combination of different methods, study groups, local and temporal setting, and different theoretical perspectives in dealing with a phenomenon*" (Flick, 2018, p. 183). I applied methodological triangulation to increase the credibility of the study by means of using multiple methods such as semi-structured interviews, multiple NGIs, and secondary data, as illustrated in figure 2. I assessed data triangulation by using the various data sets that emerged throughout the analysis process: raw materials, codes, concepts, and theoretical saturation. Further, I applied persistent observation by continuously reading and rereading the data, analyzing them, and revising the concepts through an iterative research process. However, a member check of written findings could

have strengthened the credibility of the study further, as the researcher and respondents might look at the data with different eyes. It is a limitation of the study that I have conducted this study alone. When two students write together, they can do separate data analyses and compare findings to increase the credibility of the study.

Figure 2. *Methodological triangulation*
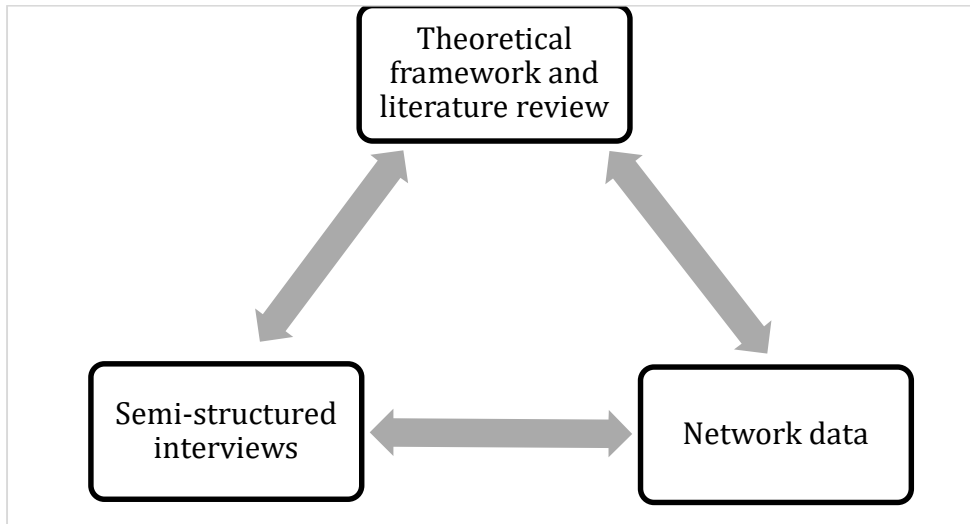
Transferability concerns the aspect of applicability (Tracy, 2010). As a researcher, one must thoroughly describe the participants and the research process to enable the reader to assess whether the findings are transferable to their own setting. In this study, I thoroughly explain the context of the study, sample, sample size, inclusion criteria, interview procedures, topics, and data collection process. However, due to ethical considerations, I have excluded information that can identify participants, such as occupation and nationality from the thesis. Because I have excluded specific information, this limits the transferability of the study to some degree.

Dependability includes the aspect of consistency. The analysis process needs to align with the accepted standards for a particular design. The thematic analysis and social network analysis used for data analysis suit the qualitative design. The concept of dependability concerns observed variations with links to an identifiable cause of influence (Guba, 1981).

Confirmability concerns the aspect of neutrality. One must secure the inter-subjectivity of the data. The interpretation should not be based on the researcher's preferences and viewpoints but must be grounded in the data. As I formulated the research questions based on the collected data material, I did not look for the specific outcome during data analysis, strengthening the neutrality aspect. However, I acknowledge that even though the intent is to be neutral, it is important to be self-aware and reflexive about my role in the process of collecting, analyzing, and interpreting the data, and in the pre-conceived assumptions I bring to the research. Therefore, all interviews are supplemented with reflexive notes to describe the setting and aspects of the interview. The reflexive notes include subjective responses to the setting and relationship with the interviewees.

Chapter 4. Data Analysis

In this chapter, I explain of how the semi-structured interview and the egocentric networks were analyzed.

4.1 Analysis of the interviews

Thematic analysis is a method for identifying, analyzing, and reporting patterns within qualitative data (Braun & Clarke, 2006). It minimally organizes and describes the data in rich detail. However, it frequently goes further than this and interprets various aspects of the research topic (Boyatzis, 1998). In analyzing the interviews, I followed the five steps in thematic analysis: (1) familiarization with data, (2) making preliminary open codes to the data to describe the content, (3) search for patterns or themes in the codes across different interviews, (4) define and name selected themes, (5) report. Further, I used the 'constant comparison' method (Moser & Korstjens, 2018) to compare elements present in one interview with elements in others and the social network data.

To familiarize myself with the data, I listened to the recordings of the interviews one time before starting the transcription. I transcribed the interviews the same day it was conducted or, in a few cases, the following day. After the transcription, I read the interviews

several times to get a good overview of the content. Even though the transcription of verbal information and the rereading might be viewed as a time-consuming task, it should be seen as *"a key phase of data analysis within interpretative qualitative methodology"* (Bird, 2005, p. 227) and be recognized as an interpretative act, where meanings are created, rather than simply a mechanical act of putting spoken sounds on paper (Lapadat & Lindsay, 1999). I consider the transcribing the interviews an important step of the analysis. After finishing transcription and reading, I uploaded the interviews to Nvivo, a Computer Assisted Qualitative Data Analysis (CAQDAS) package for Mac (Version 1.4.1).

In Nvivo, I reread the interviews, but this time I made preliminary codes to describe the content. The interview guide also provided help to make the codes, as the questions in the interview guide were specifically designed to capture different information about the following: organizational support, intention to stay in Norway, job satisfaction, social life, psychological well-being, challenges of relocation and improvements for the future.

Further, I searched for patterns or themes in the codes across different interviews. I often needed to go back and reread the interviews that had already been coded to ensure I got all the insights. Moreover, data analysis is not a linear process of simply moving from one phase to the next. Instead, it is a more recursive process, where movement is back and forth as needed throughout the phases (Braun & Clarke, 2006). I identified themes and patterns within the data in an abductive approach, as suitable with the methodological choices made previously.

The language used to formulate the questions in the interview guide was purposely without any theoretical concepts and definitions, so the conversation flow would be as easy as possible for the participant. Furthermore, it was important to translate the conversation into theory when analyzing the transcript of the interviews. The use of theoretical concepts during the coding made it easy to keep findings relevant but also, reading the transcripts and labeling new information as themes added depth to the study in terms of additional insights on the topic. For example, instead of using theoretical concepts such as asking: "Did the organization provide you with informational support?" I asked instead: "What did the

company/your leaders/your colleagues do to welcome you and integrate you into your position? (…) was it formal, or informal? (...) What do you think of the way you were welcomed?" and the insights from these questions were labeled as the theme "organizational support" during analysis.

4.2 Analysis of ego networks

Social Network Analysis (SNA) is the study of relationships and connections most commonly, although not exclusively, between individuals (Smith & Christakis, 2008). SNA seeks to understand what relationships look like and how networks are formed and create influence. Egocentric research focuses on individuals and their immediate social environment (Perry et al., 2018). The person of interest is referred to as "ego" and the people appointed to ego's network, like relatives, colleagues, and friends, are referred to as "alters". Measuring access to social capital should take into account (1) the number of alters in an individual's social network, (2) the resources these alters give access to, and (3) the availability of these resources, which depend on the willingness to help (Flap, 2002). The social network analysis allowed insights into the respondent's composition of networks; how many colleagues, friends, and others provide them with different types of support. Further, I combined the network analysis findings with the findings from the semi-structured interviews to find patterns and explore similarities and differences across the different cases. When combining the findings based on length of stay, a pattern of different needs over time emerged.

I created the network visualizations using the package *egor* (Krenz et al., 2019) and *tidyverse* (Wickham, 2019) in R (R Develompent Core Team, 2010). First, I manually coded the data collected in the Network Canvas activity on the tablet. Each alter in the candidates' network were given a code, and information about gender, nationality, frequency of contact, closeness, support, context, and relationship to other alters was filed manually into an excel spreadsheet and imported to R. This step is possible to do automatically by exporting an excel file directly from Network Canvas Server. However, I made an error while coding the questions in the protocol, making the direct output file incorrect. The error was that a wrongful question was coded as informational support when it was supposed to be appraisal support. Hence, I decided to manually code all networks to get the correct answers from each

type of support. Appendix 5, 6, 7, and 8 shows the specific questions used to measure each type of social support, and the results from the social network analysis.

While I in this chapter have explained the processes of analyzing the interviews and ego networks, the interpretation and explanation of the findings are covered in Chapter 5.

Chapter 5. Findings and Discussion

In this section, I present the findings, answer the two research questions presented in Section 1.2 and discuss these based on the theoretical framework presented in Chapter 2. First, I present the aims of the study along with the framework of three phases and five categories of social capital needs identified from data analysis. I elaborate on the three phases and five categories with evidence from the empirical findings and discuss these based on the study's theoretical framework.

RQ1: *What are the expatriates' social capital needs during an assignment, and how do these needs change over time?*

RQ2: *How does the extent these needs are met relate to expatriate success criteria?*

The aim of this study was to explore the expatriates' social capital needs after relocating to a new country and whether these needs change over time. The relocation process is challenging for expatriates as they arrive in a new foreign country and have to adjust to an unfamiliar environment with a new set of norms and rules (Shaffer et al., 2012). To help adjust to the new environment, expatriates seek social support from their social networks to decrease the uncertainty of the relocation process (van der Laken et al., 2019). However, little research has explored the temporal aspects (Hippler et al., 2015) of expatriates' social capital needs and whether these needs vary over time. Furthermore, little research has explored the type of support provided by specific actors or groups in the expatriates' networks (van der Laken et al., 2019).

## 5.1 Temporal aspects of expatriates' social capital needs

The empirical findings suggest that the expatriates' social capital needs change over time. During data analysis, I identified a pattern of three phases with different needs based on five categories. The three phases, as illustrated in figure 3, are:

1. **Initial phase** (0-6 months)

2. **Professional socialization phase** (6-12 months)
3. **Social integration phase** (12+ months)

Figure 3. *Timeline of candidates' length of stay and empirical findings*
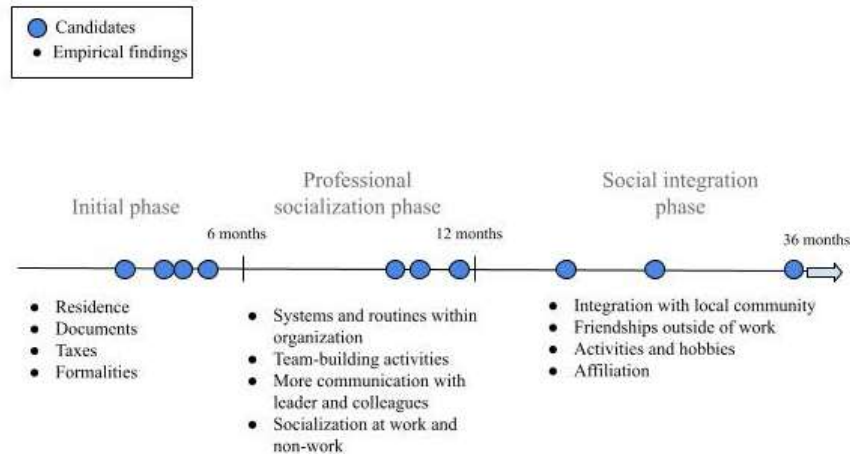
Note. *The figure presents a timeline describing the three phases and the characteristics of each phase. The candidates are marked as blue dots on the timeline based on length of stay in the host country.*

The five categories found within each phase are; *time*, how long the expatriates have stayed in the host country. *Characteristics* concern the features of needs the expatriates state in this specific phase. *Success criteria* concern how these needs can be met and the outcome of having them met. *Social support providers* involve the three facets: 'who *can* support'; the alters who are suitable to provide the specific type of support. 'Whom they *go to* for support'; the alters in the network the expatriates' approach for the specific type of support. 'Who *gives* the support' concerns the actual action of support. *Transition triggers* are the mechanisms that trigger changing needs. A summary of the framework is presented in table 6. It must be noted that the phase transitions identified come from this specific sample, meaning the cutoff points are not generalizable. The transitions are probably fluid and will vary depending on the person, company, and situation. Therefore, these phase transitions must be seen as approximates. Below I elaborate on the three phases and the empirical findings in detail.

5.1.1 *Initial Phase*

Time. The 'initial phase' includes the *time* from arrival in the host country and approximately the first six months of stay.

Characteristics. The feature of needs in this phase is practical needs, such as help with formalities, documents, taxes, and residence. Since the expatriate has relocated to a new country with new sets of norms and rules, they need assistance and information about which formalities and rules apply to them as international workers in a foreign country. As instrumental support ties provide resources and assistance (House, 1981) and informational support provides advice and information (House et al., 1985), we can interpret these needs are met in the form of instrumental and informational support. These are context-specific needs that can be met by organizational support from the host organization. The four respondents in this phase all state satisfaction with the received organizational support, that is, the extent to which the organization cares about their well-being through various policies, practices, and treatment (Rhoades & Eisenberger, 2002). Respondent 7 shares her experience with receiving good support from the organization in the form of instrumental and informational support during the first months of her stay:

"Ohhh, everybody [leaders and colleagues] were really kind and welcoming. HR helped me find an apartment, and I moved with [pets]. They helped me because not all owners allow for the pets and so on. They helped me with the description of the apartments because it was all in Norwegian you know. My boss helped me, gave me a lot of support. For that everything was good. Even if I need something now, I can just tell them. (…) I had to get the Norwegian [phone] number, I went to the police, the tax office, you know. All these papers. Each country has their own rules. Here, I got all the information [from HR] and I arrange everything by myself. For me, that was good. (…) Really it is so easy doing everything online. You can book the appointment and go there, and you don't have any kind of issue with the language." Respondent 7

Respondent 8 shares a similar experience with receiving instrumental and informational support during the first months of his stay. As everything in Norway is new to him, he appreciated getting help with a resident id and establishing a bank account.

> *"They [HR] have been helping me a lot. I mean not [occupation] wise, or technical wise, it's more like.. outside of company related stuff. Make a bank account, or I need to do something like going to the Police station to get a resident ID and stuff. So yeah, they brought me around and kind of like tell me: "This is what you have to do, this is what you have to apply for". This is all brand new to me!»* Respondent 8

Success Criteria. The outcome of having these needs met is job satisfaction. Job satisfaction represents a combination of workers' positive or negative feelings toward their work and the extent to which expectations are met (Lee et al., 2015). For the initial phase, the empirical findings suggest that all respondents have had their expectations of organizational support met. All four respondents state positive feelings towards received organizational support and overall high job satisfaction.

Respondent 2 states that he has previously worked in several positions like the one he holds now and that he is pleased with and likes all parts of his job.

> *I am very happy [with the job]. In fact, when I moved to Norway, it is not the first time I work with [job description]. (...) I like all parts of [job description].* Respondent 2

Respondent 5 shares that he is new in the field and enjoys every part as it is interesting learning new skills.

> *"For me [the job] is very nice. It's the second project that I am working on. I am new in this field, so I enjoy every part of it."* Respondent 5

Respondent 8 shares that he is currently working with his passion, which motivated him to take on an assignment overseas to learn even more and expand his experience.

"I enjoy almost all parts [of the job], actually! My passion is to do [job description]. That's why I decided I wanted to come here, because this is the headquarters, so it has more stuff here, more information that I can learn. Better experience."
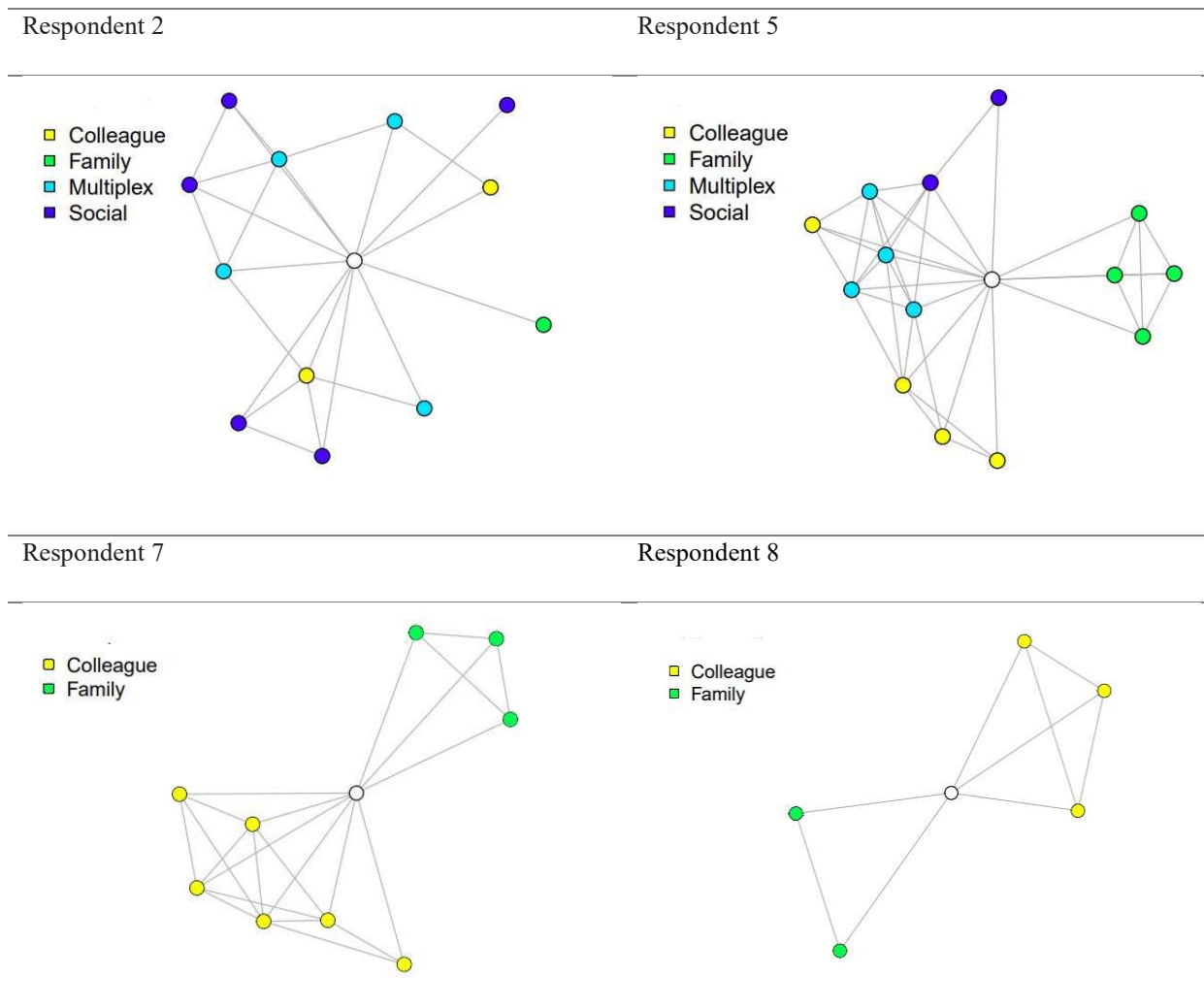Respondent 8

Respondent 7 states that she generally likes her job, particularly when creating business relationships and solving internal and external issues.

"Generally speaking, I like my job. It's been almost 20 years. Maybe more than 20 years that I have been part of [job description]. In my work life I've had several positions, so I like to create business relationships. And if we have issues, I find a way to fix it. If we have an internal issue… Because we are the link you know. You have to adjust, understand what is happening inside and outside, and make the best decision for the company." Respondent 7

Social Support Providers. The emerging social networks of the expatriates give insight into access to social capital, as presented in figure 4. The figure presents the social networks of the four respondents in the initial phase, with ego in the middle and the different supportive actors in colors around the ego. The alters *who can support* with organizational support are the leaders and the HR department in the parent company. This means having alters from the work domain in the network is of value in this phase of the assignment. The expatriate in this phase also expects support from the organization and *goes to them* for support. In this case, they also *receive* support from the leaders and HR department. As figure 4 illustrates, the networks vary in size and social ties. However, all have supportive ties from the host organization – colleagues and multiplexity ties, which are alters that are both colleague and a social relation. In other words, all respondents have access to instrumental and informational support in their networks. Supportive agents are colleagues, family,

multiplexity ties, and social ties. All respondents state to be satisfied with received support, despite variation in social ties. The variation in social ties, but not in satisfaction, indicates that social ties are not decisive in this phase.

Figure 4. *Social networks in the initial phase*

Respondent 2	Respondent 5

Respondent 7	Respondent 8

Note. This figure presents the social networks of the four respondents in the initial phase, with ego in the middle and the different supportive actors in colors around the ego.

Appendix 6 presents an overview of the supportive actors for each type of support. HCNs, third-country nationals, and compatriots are the alters mentioned for instrumental and informational support by the respondents in the initial phase. HCNs are the alters whose nationality is Norwegian. Further, compatriots are those alters that share the same nationality

as ego. Furthermore, third-country nationals are alters who have different nationalities from the host country and the expatriate.

Transition Triggers. In this phase the emerging need for professional inclusion and socialization triggers the transition to the next phase. The cutoff point at 5-6 months for this phase is based on the empirical findings. From the networks, we can see that respondent 7 and respondent 8 lack multiplexity and social ties. Respondent 8 shared that even though he is satisfied with the practical help received from the company and is feeling satisfied at work, he is starting to feel lonely in the new country, affecting social well-being and psychological well-being. He shares that it is hard to get to know the colleagues as they tend to only want to talk about work matters, and not have trivial chats to build relations.

"Socially, it is different. Because I know Norwegians, they don't really.. talk. When colleagues want to talk, they go straight to the point. But in [home country], people just.. they talk, they kind of do a general talking first. Like "Hey man, how are you? What have you been doing today? Bla bla bla" All that. Here it's more: "I came to you, I want to talk to you about this, so I'm just gonna go straight to the point." I think sometimes it's a good idea, because people are busy, and they just want to get straight to the point. (...) So sometimes it is good, sometimes it is not good.. Because you know, I need to get to know people too." Respondent 8

5.1.2 *Professional Socialization Phase*

Time. The phase identified as the 'professional socialization phase' includes time duration from six until 12 months.

Characteristics. The three candidates in this phase acknowledge the social support given in the beginning of employment in the form of residence. Not one person mentions help with documents or other practical issues because it is no longer relevant as those needs are satisfied, and new needs have emerged. The characteristics of needs in this phase are professional inclusion and non-work socialization. With regard to professional inclusion, the

respondents state to miss more involvement within the organization. Further, the respondents want systems and routines for more communication. Team building activities and socialization at work are mentioned as something they both appreciate and want more of. Furthermore, some mention a need for socialization outside of work.

Respondent 1 states that the company supported residence, but that was it. His colleagues have been supportive, and they socialize outside of work. However, he states to be disappointed with the organization's lack of systems and routines. At one point, no one from the organization contacted him or checked up on him for a period of four months. His experience is that big companies are impersonal, and that there is not much room for getting close contact between employees. He also mentions that the manager has been available at all times but has limited resources:

> *"The company in particular, I am not sure. Yeah, they supported me with an apartment. But then the rest, I will say, was related to colleagues. (...) To be honest, company wise, I was not so happy. (...) In [month] I finally had a follow-up meeting. But the phase that was [four months] was disconnected. (...) There was a bit of lack of coordination. So maybe they failed a bit there. But for instance, my manager was available at all times but had limited resources also. It depends a bit on.. I don't know who had the straightforward responsibility, but… department wise [colleagues], it was okay, but whole company wise it took quite some time to follow up. My experience is that big companies are impersonal. There is not much room for getting closer contact between employees and so on."* Respondent 1

Respondent 4 also states that the organization helped with formalities such as accommodation and paperwork. However, he states that there is room for improvement. He rephrases the invitation letter he received with regards to this research project about ensuring a smoother transition for future international employees:

"There is always room for improvement. Like you said, a more "smooth transition". We had some, let's say, challenges and pitfalls. We spoke with HR in [home country]. We also tried here, but.. it's complicated. Communication is complicated because there is none [from HR in Norway]. I did not have any meetings. I did not speak with any HR from this place [from arrival up until now]." Respondent 4

He continues with adding that assuring residence is important, but only to an extent, as he start getting a need to do more things outside the organization, and the organization do not have much activity for young people:

"I think it's important to assure the accommodation, according to the minimal needs, but at one point, you feel the need to do something else. You need to relax in a way or another. (...) I also think a car is important here because you cannot escape. We are not at home; we cannot do all our hobbies. (...) They [colleagues] tried to involve us in some activities like football. So I play every Sunday now. (...) but it's a small town, and [organization] don't have not much activity say, for young people like us."

Success Criteria. As with the needs in the initial phase, the extent to which the expatriates' needs are met have outcomes. The success criteria for this phase are job satisfaction, social well-being, and psychological well-being. The respondents in the professional socialization phase state overall satisfaction with their job, expect Respondent 4 that has a bit reduced job satisfaction. With regards to social well-being, Respondent 1 shares about feeling a bit lonely sometimes, but that his colleagues, mostly third-country nationals, socialize outside of work:

"....So I feel relatively okay. Maybe, let's say, a bit lonely sometimes…Because it is a different culture, a more quiet one also. The place is much, much smaller than [home town] (...) in my department we are mostly foreigners. So that means that the group socially speaking is more active than others. Sometimes we have dinners, sometimes we do something outdoors. And sometimes some people from other departments join

us. And they say «this is really only happening with you guys….They [colleagues] are very social and open, and they will go to play board games, go to someone's house, or go on a hike." Respondent 1

Moreover, the need for socialization is not met for all respondents in this group, and this affects social well-being. Respondent 3 and 4 has relatively few social ties in their network, and Respondent 4 states to lack social relations:

"For me, it's not very problematic to stay here. Despite this, there are some things we are lacking here. We are lacking social life. We are here and it's a small town." Respondent 4

Social Support Providers. The respondents' social networks in this phase are relatively limited, as presented in figure 5. The appropriate support for the needs in this phase is emotional support, informational support, and organizational socialization. The alters *who can support* are colleagues, leaders and HR department in the host organization, and non-work relations. This means having alters from the work and community domains in the network that provides with the necessary support for this phase is advantageous. The expatriate in this phase also expects support from within the organization and *goes to them* for support. In the case for this sample, they do not *receive* much support from the organization. Respondent 1 has some socialization with colleagues, but respondents 3 and 4 state to miss more social connections at work and outside of work.

Figure 5. *Social networks in the professional socialization phase*
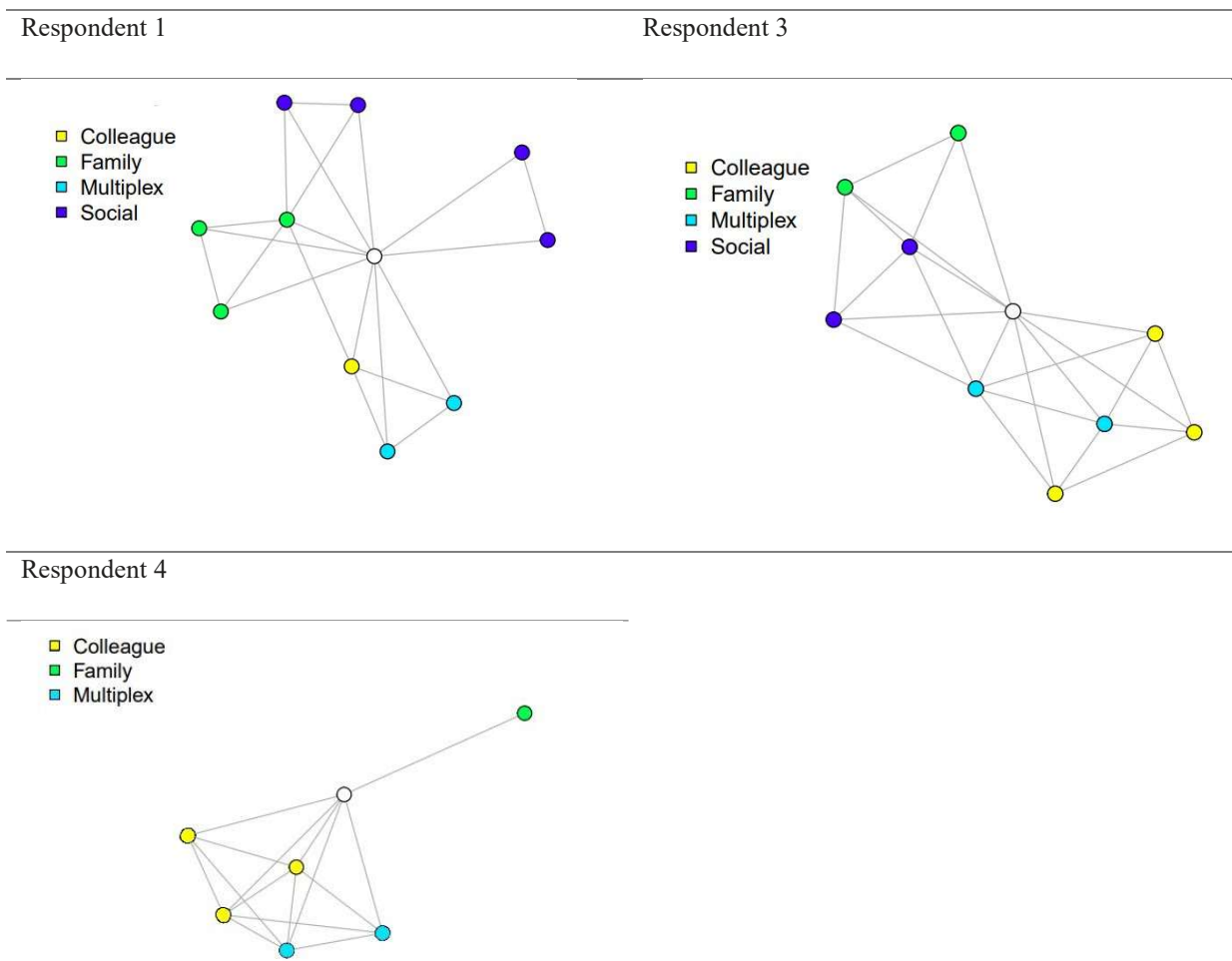
Respondent 1	Respondent 3

Respondent 4

Note. This figure presents the social networks of the three respondents in the professional socialization phase, with ego in the middle and the different supportive actors in colors around the ego.

From the analysis of the social networks, the expatriates all have access to emotional support. However, this support mainly comes from family via telephone or social media and compatriots. Respondent 1 shares that he has a relatively limited social network with a few social connections at work and that he keeps in contact with friends and family from his home country.

> *"And about the network itself, my connections are relatively limited, so I have a few, let's say, social connections - department colleagues and so on. But then I still keep a*

lot of contact with my home country - so family, girlfriend, and a few friends from there." Respondent 1

The compatriots often act as a bridge between home and host culture, thus reducing the cultural distance felt by the expatriate. Especially Respondent 3 have several multiplexity ties to compatriots. The compatriots have a shared understanding of the challenges of relocating. He said that they arrived together in Ålesund, and they knew each other from the home country.

"It's actually a very good thing [to know compatriots] because as from when we arrive [in the host country], we have each other." Respondent 3

From the social networks, we see that Respondent 1 has multiple social ties outside work, Respondent 3 have several social ties while respondent 4 has none. Concerning social well-being, Respondent 1 shared to have several social ties with colleagues and that they often socialize outside work. Moreover, with regards to psychological well-being, respondent 1 state to be more satisfied with his life in Norway than respondent 4. Respondent 1 shares:

"For now, I would say I'm quite happy. So let's say on a scale from 0-10, let's put an 8. I'm feeling good about the job. It is dynamic. I'm quite okay with waking up in the morning. You know when you wake up in the morning and you feel «I don't want to do this» - that hasn't happened yet." Respondent 1

Respondent 4 reports a bit lower well-being, and that he would have a different mindset if he was fulfilled and happy:

"Maybe… around 6 [out of ten] (…) *I don't know. If you are happy and fulfilled, you will have a different mindset."* Respondent 4

Respondent 3 would not elaborate much on his psychological well-being but said that on a scale from 0 to 10 on how happy he is with his life he put a 7.

"Hm.. In particular, I don't know… Because there is not much to do here. Maybe around seven out of ten.." Respondent 3

The insight from this is that Respondent 1 is more satisfied than Respondent 4 and Respondent 3, and a reason for this might be that Respondent 1 has a more diverse network than the two others, and thus, access to more diverse support and alters to socialize with outside of work. In other words, Respondent 1 gets his needs met to a higher degree than Respondent 4 and 3. Furthermore, only Respondent 1 have social relations to HCNs as shown in figure 6, which can imply that he is more integrated into the host country community than the two others in this phase. Even though Respondent 3 have several multiplexity ties with compatriots, he states to still lack socialization. This can imply even though he has been in Norway for almost a year, he has not yet made social connections at work outside the group of compatriots he arrived with.

Figure 6. *Venn diagrams of the expatriates' networks.*

Respondent 1	Respondent 3

Respondent 4
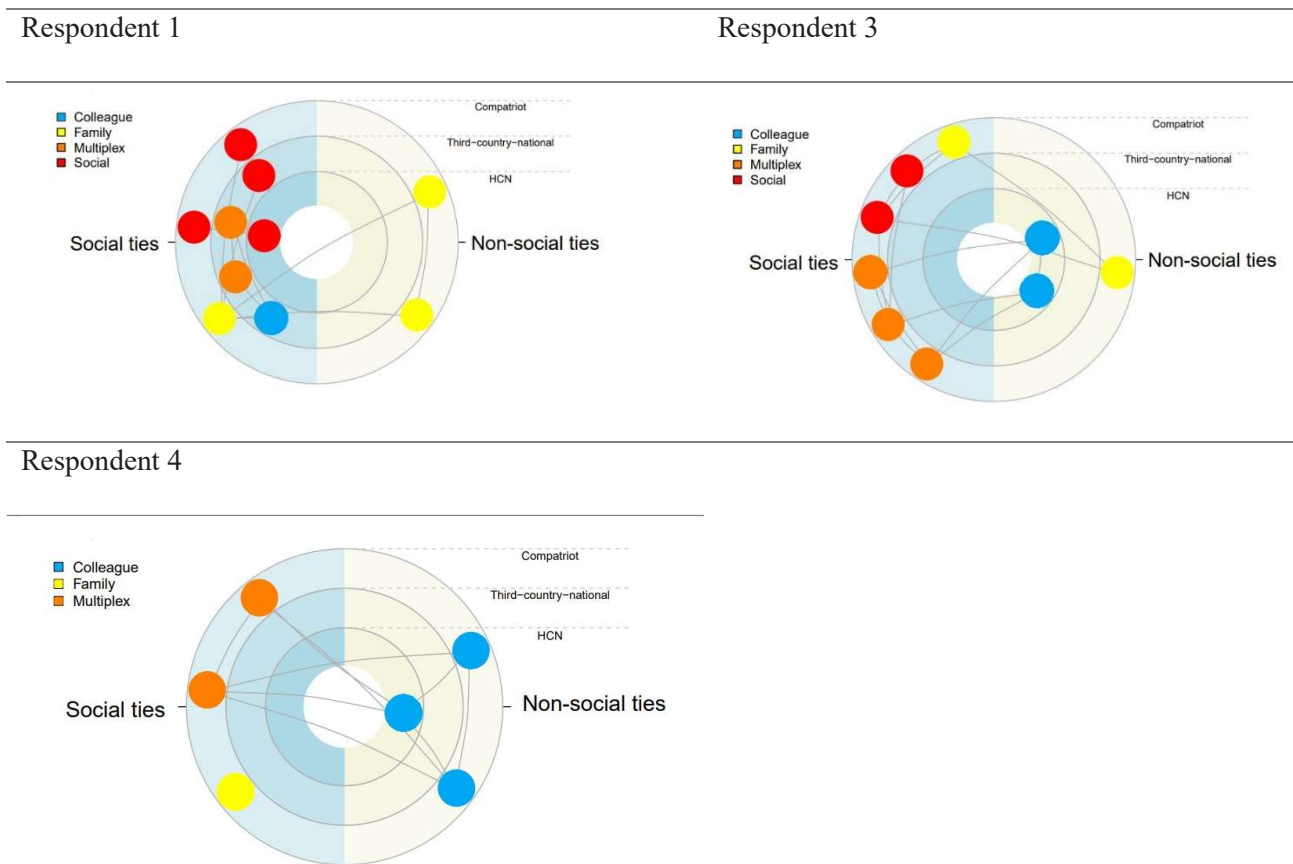
Note. This figure presents venn-diagrams of the networks of the expatriates separated by non-compatriots (outer circle), third-country nationals (middle circle), and HCNs (inner circle). Pies are separated by social ties and non-social ties.

Transition trigger. The need for belonging outside work is the transition trigger in this phase. As Respondent 4 mentioned, he misses activities for young people outside of work. Furthermore, Respondent 3 shares that he has his network, friends, and family back in the home country, and that if you do not have anything to fill the time between work and sleep in the host country, it also affects the functioning at work. He implicit mentions that he lacks social connections outside of work in Ålesund, as the only interaction he made for weeks was at work:

"Well from this point of view, it's not much, it's very little [socialization]. Mainly I go to Ålesund on Saturdays depending on the weather. It's good that we have a gym and it's something to fill the time between work and sleep, let's say. Because if you only wake up and go to work, and go back to sleep, then work doesn't work. (...) The main difference is that in [home country], I'm staying at home. I have everything there, my network, friends and family and I don't have to go to other places and stuff like that. Here, if you want to do something else.. you can go to [city center] or have a day off tracking, but that's about it. (...) for a few weeks, the only interaction I made was at work." Respondent 3

5.1.3 *Social Integration Phase*

Time. The 'social integration phase' that starts when the expatriate has been in the country from 12 months.

Characteristics. The characteristic of this phase is need for belonging outside of work. The candidates in this phase state a need to belong in communities and activities outside of work. None of the candidates in this phase longer mentions practical needs or professional socialization needs. A reason for this is that these needs are met, and new needs have emerged. The features of needs in this phase are affiliation through friendships outside work, activities, and hobbies organized outside the host organization. Respondent 6 shares about getting to know two HCNs outside of work, and that this had improved her well-being in Norway:

"Of course, at one point you want to do something, or make some connections outside the company. Like, I found two Norwegian friends that do [activity]. It was good for me. They take me to the good places, you know.. they have the information about which mountain is safe and so on. It was very good for me in this place." Respondent 6

Similarly, Respondent 10 states to have successfully integrated into a local community, and shares that he thinks this has been crucial for his well-being both at work and outside of work:

"Seeking out a community outside of work is crucial to have a sense of belonging here. And making new connections can actually help you at work as well. Actually, one of the people I got to know at [activity] was working in the same area as me at [organization]. So suddenly I had contact at work as well." Respondent 10

Success criteria. Success criteria in this phase is job satisfaction, social well-being, and psychological well-being. The extent of having these needs met affects the success criteria. The needs in this phase can be met with emotional support, as this type of support offers genuine encouragement, acceptance, and connectedness. The difference between the professional socialization phase and the social integration phase is that while the need to belong in the latter phase was connected to the host organization, the need to belong in this phase is connected to the community outside of work. According to McCreanor et al. (2006), a key determinant of a sense of home is the degree to which people feel accepted within the community. Feeling like "a part of them" facilitate adjustment. The outcome of having this need met is significant. Respondent 10 states that creating friendships outside of work is important for international newcomers:

"Actually, I really… I found a community to join, for the possibility of finding a lot of friends. No matter how, no matter who, you will find someone. I seeked out and started [activity] here in Ålesund. Here I found a lot of friends. Like, this is something I strongly recommend to international people moving here. Find a community outside of work. Find a community without economic profits. Because at work, you are working for the profits. So the social relations will be according to the hours, according to the salary, and so on. It is not first and foremost a friendship. You can of course find friends at work, but it is harder. In a society like at the training sessions, or music class, you have the possibility to find people with the same interests as you,

and you spend a lot of time there. Also these people can help you with your normal life, and also working life." Respondent 10

He shares that when you start meeting people at random places, and can have a small chat, it makes him feel a special type of belonging:

Feeling lonely in a new country is a big problem. That's why being involved in a local community or having friendships outside of work is so important. For example, when we had a trip to [city in Europe] and went to Vigra, one of my friends from [activity] was working as security there. So I see now the wide range of connections. Suddenly I meet people at random places like the airport or on the street and can have a small chat. It's the big difference. To feel that type of belonging." Respondent 10

Furthermore, he states to have high social well-being and psychological well-being even though the first year was challenging:

"I enjoy living here, socially. Very much. Maybe you have a bad day you know. With yourself or with work. But if you join another community, parallel with your "normal life" like work and at home, you will find something to make yourself feel better. (...) I'm 100% happy, mentally. But there are a lot of challenges for me. I'm from outside the EU, so everything is new to me. Culture, language, rules.. Everything. I must do a lot of things. (...) So the first year of living in Norway is challenging. Now that I have passed all these challenges, I feel that I am happy."

Similarly, Respondent 6 state to be satisfied with her life in Ålesund, even though there are a few things she is missing from her home country:

"I feel well here. I think it's a nice place to live. At the same time some things are missing. For example, your family, your town, [home country] and food. But [on a scale from 0-10] I can say 7 out of 10. I can also say 10 some days, and other days less.. But at the same time, I love it here. Because I love nature, I love.. I'm a sporty girl. So I love [activity] and [activity]. So I cannot say that I'm not doing well here."

Conversely, lack of attachment is connected to various ill effects on health, adjustment, and well-being such as depression (Baumeister & Leary, 2017). Respondent 9 has been in Norway for a long time, and in contrast to Respondent 10, he struggles a lot with getting involved in communities. He states an intense longing for relationships, and the lack of such relationships has caused him to suffer both at work and personally.

"I think a lot of Norwegians are nice people, it just hasn't been easy for me to get involved in any community here. And all social events include partying. (...) I miss doing stuff without alcohol. Like.. At work, I asked if someone wanted to join [activity] or something, and everybody declined for 'this and that'. And later that evening they all went out to party." Respondent 9

When asked about his psychological well-being, he shares about a lack of attachment, and the outcomes of loneliness:

"I still have major depression. The situation with [company], little sleep, home alone.. The worst thing is that I have no one. (...) So, I'm so envious... of my colleagues who actually have someone to come home to. So then I just sit there, at home. Alone. And yeah, it affect my mental health a lot.. Even though Norway is a good country.. and does a lot to ensure that the people who live here actually have a good time, I don't feel like it applies to me. (...) But yeah, my mental well-being.. I'm not doing good at all." Respondent 9

Similar to the ill effects mentioned by Baumeister and Leary (2017), lack of attatchment is connected to low adjustment and well-being. Respondent 9 shares how the lack of attachment outside work has influenced his performance at work, and also social well-being:

"Poor mental health can cause people to struggle at work. Like me, with no one to come home to, or be social with. If the only thing you come home to is your bed and your computer, then it's a pretty sad existence.. and of course, it sometimes makes me perform bad at work." Respondent 9

He adds that he finds it problematic to establish new friendships in Ålesund, and that he lacks arenas he is comfortable with getting in touch with new people in:

"I have a problem making friends here also. When my mom calls, she always says "Why don't you just go out and find some friends? You're so lonely. Just bring your laptop and go to a local café!" So, she means... Just sit down at a café and say hallo to random people? Imagine that you are sitting at a café, and a random person comes up to you and says "Good afternoon! I'm all alone, can we sit together?" That's just weird behavior and I will never do that!" Respondent 9

With regards to social well-being, he continues to share that it is difficult to form and keep friendships with Norwegians in particular, and that he misses being part of a group or a community.

"Socially.. Well, I find it quite challenging here. But when I first came to Ålesund, I met quite a few people who were kind, and nice too. It wasn't like they said "No,

you're a foreigner, you have to leave" or anything like that. It was really more like
"you have to join in on things!" and I went to play floorball a few times [in the
beginning]. But what I find really difficult is finding Norwegian friends and keeping
in touch with them. I don't have any connection to the local communities here. And I
miss being part of something, if you see what I mean." Respondent 9

The respondents all state a need for attachment and belonging and the extent to which the needs are met have different outcomes. When the needs are met, the expatriate experience sense of belonging which again affects the psychological well-being, job satisfaction and social well-being positively. When the needs are not met, the outcome is various negative health effects such as depression, loneliness, and isolation. Another outcome of unmet needs in this phase is negative job satisfaction and reduced performance.

Social support providers. The appropriate support for the needs in this phase is emotional support. The alters *who can support* are non-work relations. This means having alters from the community domain in the network that provide with emotional support is advantageous. The expatriate in this phase also expects support from non-work relations and *goes to them* for support. In this case, some receive the needed support, while other do not. Findings from the network analysis show that all expatriates' have access to emotional support. However, Respondent 10 has a larger and more diverse base of social support, as shown in figure 7. Respondent 6 and 9 has approximately the same network size, but Respondent 6 has several non-redundant ties while Respondent 9 has no social connections outside of work. This infers that Respondent 6 has access to more non-redundant information, as alters with lack of ties to other alters in the network is connected with having access to novel and diverse information and alternative ways of thinking (Burt, 2004). The findings from the interviews underscores this, as she reports she has become friend with two HCNs who have valuable information about the activity she is interested in.

Figure 7. *Social networks in the integration phase*

Respondent 6	Respondent 9
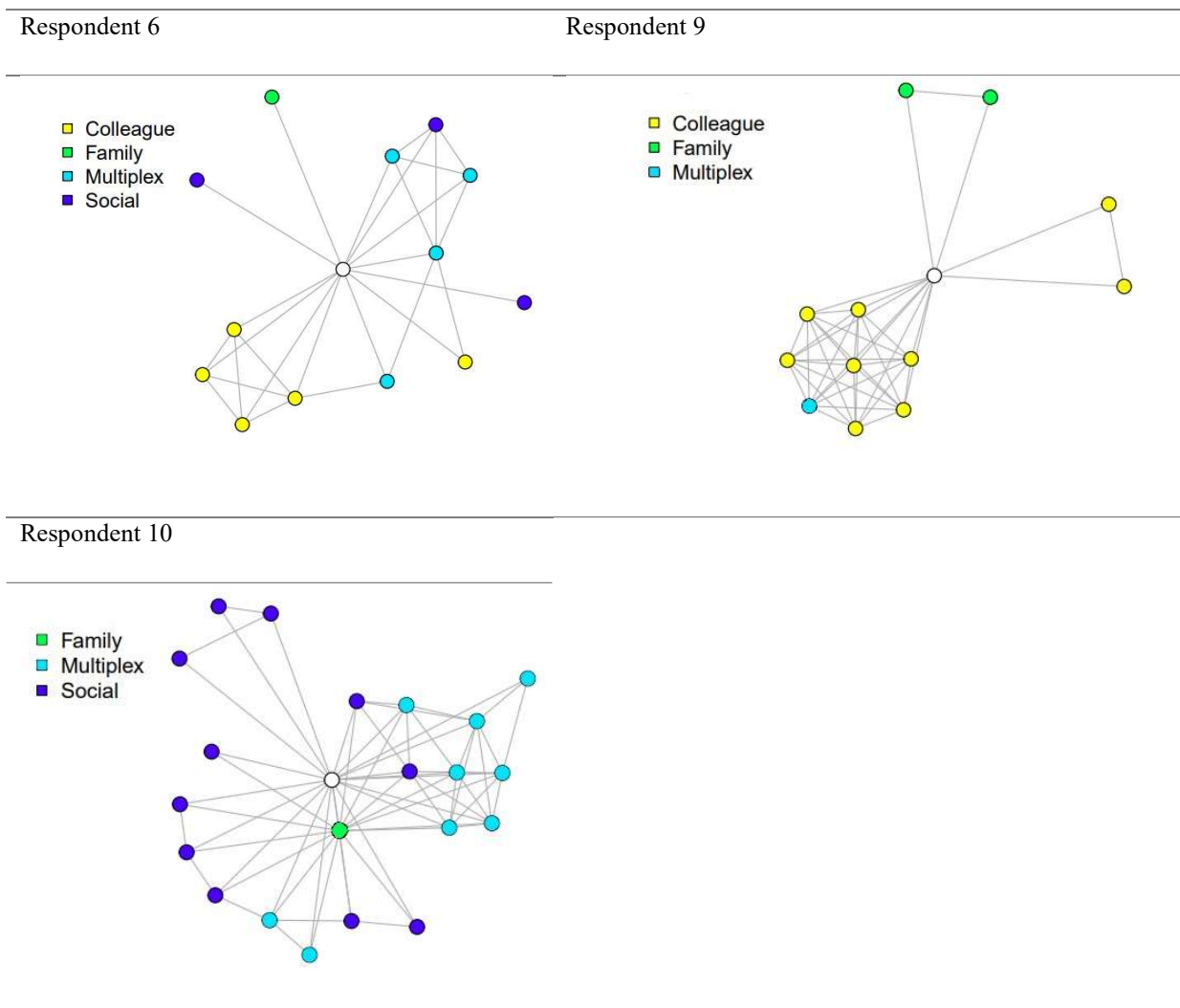
Respondent 10

Note. This figure presents the social networks of the three respondents in the social integration phase, with ego in the middle and the different supportive actors in colors around the ego.

Large and diverse networks have been connected to many positive expatriate outcomes in earlier research, such as better psychological well-being (Wang & Kanungo, 2004), performance (Fee & Gray, 2020) and retention (Ren et al., 2014). The findings from this research underscores this, as Respondent 10 who states to be well integrated into the local community, also has the largest network and access to most diverse social capital. It is seen that a broader social capital base creates multiple opportunities for better adjustment since different groups offer dissimilar resources. Furthermore, the respondent with the smallest network size, and overall, more limited network, Respondent 9, reports low psychological well-being, social well-being, and job satisfaction.

5.2 Summary of Findings

To sum up the empirical findings, the framework presented in table 3 below present an overview of the differences between the three phases and categories.

Table 3. *Overview of differences between the three phases*

Category	Initial phase	Professional socialization	Integration phase
1. Time	0-6 months	6-12 months	12+ months
2. Characteristics	Practical needs	Professional inclusion and non-work socialization	Sense of belonging
3. Success criteria	- Job satisfaction - Organizational support - Instrumental support - Informational support	- Job satisfaction - Social well-being, - Psychological well-being - Emotional support - Informational support - Appraisal support	- Job satisfaction - Social well-being - Psychological well-being - Emotional support
4. Social support providers *- Who can support* *- Who do they go to for support* *- Who do they get*	HR and/or leader	Colleagues, leader, and non-work social relations	Non-work social relations

support from			
5. Transition trigger	Need for inclusion	Need for belonging	

5.3 Discussion

This thesis contributes to understanding how expatriates' social capital needs change over time and how and when different groups of support agents can provide support to reach the overall purpose of this study, successful outcomes of the assignment. Social capital theory suggests that individuals reach valuable resources from their social networks, facilitating their adjustment process. Based on social capital theory, the logic of the theoretical framework of this thesis is that expatriates with better access to social capital, namely social support, will have better job satisfaction, psychological well-being, and social well-being. These three proximal determinants measure a facet of expatriates' potential response to social support. Higher levels of the proximal determinants will affect more distal determinants, such as adjustment, performance, commitment, and retention.

The empirical findings suggest that the type of social capital need that will be more effective on success criteria depends on the specific needs and circumstances, and these needs and circumstances change over time. Previous studies on expatriate success have focused on general social support measures (van der Laken et al., 2019), implying that social support is a static element and thus neglected temporal aspects of changing needs. The empirical findings identify a pattern of three phases with different needs over time. Each of the three phases has distinct characteristics and needs that can be met with different social support. The three phases are the initial phase (0-6 months), the professional socialization phase (6-12 months) and the integration phase (12+ months). The next sections present a discussion of the phases based on the theoretical framework and previous research.

Initial phase. The empirical findings show that the characteristics of needs in the initial phase are practical needs. Previous research on expatriate adjustment suggests the transition period to be stressful, and that emotional support from family, compatriots, and HCNs is the most effective during the initial stages (Bayraktar, 2019). Interestingly, the findings from this study show somewhat different results. The expatriates in the initial phase state to have instrumental needs in this phase and is overall satisfied at work and with the support received. The findings suggest that the expatriates in the first months are consumed with settling into the job, and the practical aspects connected to it. As the job is the main reason for the relocation, settling into the job and the formalities that follows the relocation is

a priority in this phase. The findings suggest the most effective social support to meet the expatriates' needs of practical assistance are organizational, instrumental, and informational support. A way the findings in this phase align with the findings of Bayraktar (2019), is that expatriates receive emotional support from family, or other home country nationals, through telephone and social media. Several of the respondents stated to have contact with family via social media and thus feel close to them despite being in a new country. The fact that they keep contact with the home base might be a reason the expatriates do not mention any need for emotional support in this phase and further state overall satisfaction.

The important supportive alters in the initial phase are the foremost leaders and the HR department. In line with previous research (Bruning et al., 2012), the findings support the notion that HCNs more often provide instrumental support for expatriates. Interestingly, there is a variation in social ties among the respondents in this group, however, they all state satisfaction with received support. This variation in social ties, but not in satisfaction, indicates that social ties are not decisive in the initial period.

Kelly and McGrath (1988) pointed out that the duration of the interval between cause and effect is often left unspecified in theoretical formulations and further in the interpretation of concrete findings. In relation to this study's findings, one can conclude that the measures the organization undertake in the initial phase only have an effect in that specific phase. Help with formalities and residence as the respondent mentioned as needs is necessary in the start of employment, and the respondents report satisfaction with support received within the first months. Contrary to the findings from the initial phase, the effect of the support with practical needs alone is no longer sufficient to satisfy the employees' needs in the next phase. In other words, the duration of the interval between cause and effect regarding the instrumental support in the initial phase is demonstrated to be time constrained. For this sample, new needs occur in the time frame of five to ten months after relocation. Peltonen (1998) states that any single event is meaningful only as a positioned part of the whole set of successive events. Any current level of satisfaction may follow a recent drop or increase, and the expatriate may expect it to fall or increase further (Hippler et al., 2015). In relation to the empirical findings, this means that one cannot assume the satisfaction from the initial phase to maintain the same level over time. Even though Caligiuri et al. (2001) found that met

expectations of expatriates positively affected overall adjustment in the host country, it does not mean that expectations are static, and once the initial expectations are met, the expatriate is successfully adjusted in the host country. Based on the findings from this study, the expatriates are satisfied with support in the initial phase, but when the practical needs are met, new needs are triggered.

Professional socialization. The need for 'professional inclusion' triggers the next phase of needs. When the initial needs are met, the expatriate becomes more familiar with the work tasks and feels the surplus to socialize more at work. As the measures the organization undertakes in the initial phase do not include professional inclusion, new needs for more involvement within the organization have emerged. The empirical findings suggest that the characteristics of needs in this phase are linked to professional belonging at work and the needs mentioned by the respondents are more involvement and socializing with colleagues, systems, and routines for communication with leaders and HR. Further, some mentioned team building activities, socialization at work and outside work. Based on social capital theory, these needs can be met through socialization, emotional support, and informational support, and the supportive alters for this phase are colleagues and leaders. The network analysis revealed that most respondents in this phase still get emotional support from family via telephone and social media. However, the alters in the home country are not able to integrate the expatriate into the work domain. So even though the expatriates have access to emotional support, the supportive alters are not from the context the expatriates need emotional support from.

The theory of met expectations is the discrepancy between what a person encounters on the job in the way of positive and negative experiences and what he expects to encounter (Porter & Steers, 1973). In this phase, the expatriates have unmet needs. Unmet expectations cause various post-entry problems (Wanous et al., 1992). In the case of the respondents in the professional socialization phase, the outcomes were reduced social well-being and, in some cases, reduced job satisfaction and psychological well-being. When these needs are not met, it can be argued that the symptoms will be more complex and costly for organizations to solve later. Colleagues are the supportive agents in this phase, and mostly compatriots and third-country nationals provide the expatriate with emotional, infomational support and

socialization. Previous research suggests that the support from HCNs, compatriots, and third-country nationals is important in expatriates succeeding in their objectives (Bhaskar-Shrinivas et al., 2005; Toh & DeNisi, 2007) or whose resistance can lead to "failure" (Toh & Denisi, 2003). The empirical findings show that expatriates in this phase interact more frequently with other expatriates and third-country nationals than with HNCs. A reason for this is because it is less costly for them to do so, as they share the same context of being newcomers to the area. As a result, HCNs provide less emotional support, which is plausible since social interaction might not be frequent enough for substantial emotional support to occur (van Bakel et al., 2016). The one respondent with a more diversified network state higher well-being. This infers that the expatriates in this phase could benefit from establishing a wider range of connections, as their ties are relatively limited.

      Social integration phase. A 'need for belonging' triggers the transition to the integration phase, where the emerging need is to belong in a community or socialize outside work. In this phase, the expatriates state a need for affiliation and socialization within local communities or non-work activities. As the expatriates have been in the country for over a year, and now have multiplexity ties at the workplace, it can infer that the need for professional socialization is met, and a new need for expanding social connections to communities outside of work has emerged. The theory of a "need to belong" by Baumeister and Leary (2017) states that the need to belong is a fundamental human motivation and that people have a persuasive drive to form and maintain at least a minimum quantity of lasting, positive, and significant interpersonal relationships. The findings in this phase underscore this need, as each respondent in this phase mentions the significance of belonging outside work. As the theory suggests, people need frequent, affectively pleasant, and positive interactions with the same individuals, and they need these interactions to occur frequently, characterized by stable caring and concern of each other (Baumeister & Leary, 1995). This study's results show that the extent of having this need met is significant. By joining local communities and establishing friendships there, the respondent that had this need met reported high psychological well-being, social well-being, and job satisfaction, underscoring the importance of seeking a network outside work.

Conversely, a lack of attachment is connected to various ill effects on health, adjustment, and well-being (Baumeister & Leary, 2017). The empirical findings support this connection. When the need for belonging is not met, it leads to mental health issues such as depression, low job satisfaction, and low social well-being. People feel lonely when their belongingness needs are insufficiently met (Baumeister & Leary, 1995). Moreover, the theory suggests that belongingness, rather than mere social contact, is the crucial factor (Baumeister & Leary, 1995). Respondent 9 had only one multiplexity tie at work, and no social connections outside of work. Further, he stated to feel isolated, lonely, and depressed, with a deep desire to form connections in the local communities. As demonstrated from the findings, the outcomes of not feeling like you belong somewhere are significant, as these outcomes also affect job performance, social well-being and psychological well-being negatively. The findings show that having strong relationships outside of work is highly importance to feel socially integrated into greater society.

The need for belonging can be met with emotional support, and the appropriate supportive alters are non-work relations. This means having alters from the community domain in the network that provides with emotional support is advantageous in this phase. As supported by social capital theory, the results of the study confirmed that expatriates with larger and more diverse social networks have access to more social support (Caligiuri & Lazarova, 2002; Wang, 2002; Wang & Kanungo, 2004), thus facilitating the success criteria. The respondent with the largest network had access to the most diverse emotional support from compatriots, HNCs, and third-country nationals and stated the highest satisfaction. The respondent with non-redundant ties stated having access to information from ties with HCNs she otherwise would not have access to. This is in line with previous research on structural holes in networks and the possibility of getting access to novel information through alters without relation to other alters in a network (Burt, 2004). No transition trigger is found for this phase, which implies that there are sides of this framework that can be further examined. A thought might be that if the expatriate is not socially integrated in the host country, this can trigger to end the assignment and leave the country. But no evidence is found for this, and this needs further investigation.

6 Conclusion

In this section, I present the thesis's main findings and outline practical and theoretical implications of the study. Further, I present the limitations of the study and suggestions for further research.

Understanding the mechanisms underlying expatriate success is important for both international human resource researchers and practitioners. The study's overall purpose was to better understand when and how organizations can support expatriates to stimulate success criteria and promote positive outcomes such as a wish to stay in the region/country. The aim of this study was to explore how social capital needs of expatriates change over time and how the extent of having needs met is related to success criteria such as job satisfaction, psychological well-being, and social well-being. To assess this, the first research question was:

RQ1: *What are the expatriates' social capital needs during an assignment, and how do these needs change over time?*

The answer to the first research question is rooted in social capital theory and the empirical findings. The findings of the thesis indicate that expatriates' social capital needs changes over time. I identified a pattern of three phases with different social capital needs based on five categories. The three phases are the initial phase (0-6 months), the professional socialization phase (6-12 months), and the integration phase (12+ months). The five categories are time, characteristics, success criteria, social support providers, and transition triggers. The social capital needs are different for each phase, and different supportive actors in the network provide support for each phase. In the initial phase, the characteristics are practical needs. The social capital needs for this phase are organizational support, instrumental support, and informational support. The supportive alters are leaders and the HR-department. The most supportive agents in this phase are HCNs. However, these needs are time constrained, and as initial needs are met in the host country, new needs occur. In the professional socialization phase, the characteristics are professional inclusion and non-work socialization. The social capital needs in the phase are emotional support, informational

support, and appraisal support. The supportive alters are leaders, colleagues, and non-work relations, consisting of compatriots and third-country nationals. These needs have a temporal perspective as well, as new needs are being triggered. In the integration phase, the characteristics of needs are to belong in a community outside of work. The social capital need for this phase is emotional support, and the supportive actors are non-work ties, consisting of a mix of HCNs, compatriots, and third-country nationals.

RQ2: *How does the extent these needs are met relate to expatriate success criteria?*

The answer to the second question is rooted in social capital theory, the theory of met expectations, and the theory of 'a need to belong' (Baumeister & Leary, 2017) and the empirical findings. The findings of the thesis indicate that if the expatriates' needs are met, this positively influences expatriate success criteria. However, when needs are not being met, it can have significant negative outcomes at the individual and organizational levels. The empirical findings indicate that having needs met in the integration phase is the most crucial. When needs are not met in this phase, it can lead to various ill effects on mental health such as depression and anxiety. These mental health effects make the expatriate feel low job satisfaction, and negatively affect performance. For organizations, these outcomes can lead to losing international competence.

6.1 Practical implications of study

This study has several implications for managers of organizations with an internationalized workforce – not only multinationals but also SMEs that hire international talent. To target the organizations' limited resources most effectively, it is of practical importance to know when to intervene with correct support and use available resources to assure expatriate success.

First, this study contributes with a framework to capture a broad overview of temporal aspects of expatriates' changing social capital needs, and the appropriate social support for each phase. Organizations should be aware that expatriates need continuous support as new

needs emerge over time. More support is needed than help with the logistics, documents, and formalities necessary at the beginning of the assignment. The organization can facilitate networking for employees, thus increasing their social capital. The organization is not supposed to be the network itself but rather facilitate and give support that can assist the employee in taking the right steps to increase social capital. Organizations should consider how they can support their international employees in accessing valuable knowledge. A suggestion is to integrate expatriates by encouraging informal tie formation across nationalities by assigning mentors or 'buddys' at the same hierarchical level upon arrival (Carraher et al., 2008).

Second, the findings underline the expatriates' need for belonging and integration with local communities in the longer run. Organizations could, for instance, facilitate local hobbies by helping to find local clubs or associations based on the individual interests of the expatriates. In other words, organizations can provide informational support to expatriates by advising them about what alternatives exist outside of work based on individual interests. Alternatively, put the expatriate in contact with specific persons in the specific activity/association. It is cheaper and less resource-intensive for organizations to put in the effort to expand the social networks of expatriates than to lose international competence.

6.2 Theoretical implications of study

This study has some theoretical implications. First, in terms of expatriate adjustment and social support, this study contributes with insights into who the supportive agents in the expatriates' networks are, what type of support they give and when this support is needed. Information about the specifics of the supportive agents in expatriate networks has previously been neglected in research (Mao & Shen, 2015; van der Laken et al., 2019). Previous studies has referred to general social *support* (Black, 1990; Black & Gregersen, 1991; Tsang, 2001; Wiese, 2013) and social *networks* (Claus et al., 2015) without more detailed specification of the agents and the support they provide. This study contributes to advance the theoretical understanding of social support agents and what these social relationships can provide for expatriates. Thus, this study advances social capital theory by showing the changing value of social capital as contexts develop.

Second, this study demonstrates an awareness of temporal aspects in expatriate adjustment. Various scholars have long asked for temporal aspects in expatriate adjustment have long, as these aspects often have been neglected in expatriate research (Hippler et al., 2015). The passage of time is inseparable from the human experience, and theories and methodological approaches that ignore temporal dynamics thus fail to grasp the reality of human experience (Hippler et al., 2015). This study presents a model of how social capital needs change over time. Even though this research is a small contribution to shed light on temporal aspects in expatriate adjustment, it contributes to explore the temporal complexities of expatriates' social capital needs over time and addresses possible different levels of sample maturity as illustrated by the findings.

6.3 Limitations of the study

As aforementioned, I present a model of how social capital needs change over time in this study. However, the temporal aspects of processes are complex matters, and these complexities go well beyond just stating that needs change over time. The chosen research design with only one measurement point can predict a trend based on the sample, but more research needs to be done to generalize the findings to a larger population.

Several limitations regard the sample. First, the number of participants in this study is ten. More data would mean richer insights to support or challenge the findings of the study. For instance, more participants could rule out that the respondents were outliers. However, it was difficult to obtain more participants as many of the approached organizations did not reply, and others had no international employees or declined. Second, since a preponderance of the sample come from the same multinational organization, many of the respondents experience the same organizational support which limits the findings. A more diverse sample would give more nuances to the model. Third, the data collected is of personal character, so the need for anonymization is high. Thus, detailed information about the context of the respondents is reduced in the thesis. This limits the quality of the study in the form of

reducing the transferability of the study. Including more expatriates from various organizations could have solved this problem.

Moreover, another limitation is the chosen methods. Since name generators and interpreters are so flexible, there is little consensus of which are the best ones to use. Although I did my best to choose suitable name generators, other questions might have been more suitable to gather better insights. For instance, the questions could have further distinguished on who the supportive agents in the expatriates' social networks are. For example, in the work domain, I could have separated into leader, colleague, subordinates, and so on.

Additionally, as a novice researcher, my limited experience in conducting interviews is acknowledged to impact the richness of insights gained from the interviews. Even though I experienced to improve in conducting interviews and asking follow-up questions along the process, I may have missed some insights due to not asking the right follow-up questions, especially in the first round of data collection. More experienced interviewers would ask better follow-up questions to uncover even more insights.

6.4 Suggestions for further research

6.4.1 *Longitudinal study*

Longitudinal studies in the expatriate literature has long been called for (Hippler et al., 2015). Longitudinal study design is better suited for examining temporal aspects due to several measure points. However, having the wrong or too few measure points can lead to erroneous conclusions that no or a linear negative trend exists when in fact what is measured is an interim regression (Ployhart & Vandenberg, 2010). Hence, the number of measurement points and their temporal spacing need a strong conceptual rationale. Based on this study, a potential trend of needs is proposed which can be further tested by conducting several interviews to check whether candidates follow the phases suggested.

6.4.2 *Comparative study with a domestic sample*

Not only expatriates experience the process of transition and adjustment within organizations. People who transition to new roles, whether within their organization or in other ones, often have a hard time doing so successfully (Cross et al., 2021). Studies indicate that many employees who transition to new roles underperform, regardless of being an expatriate or domestic. There is a gap in the expatriate literature on domestic control groups and comparison of expatriate samples with equivalent domestic samples to tease out factors that relate to international dimension from those relating to all relocations (Andersen, 2021).

6.4.3 *Field observation as a supplement to semi-structured interviews*

Field observation can be mentioned as an appropriate methical approach as a supplement to semi-structured interviews. In this way, the study will to a greater extent be able to reveal whether the respondents' descriptions correspond with reality. This would strengthen the reliability of the study's findings.

Furthermore, questionnaires could contribute to increased insight. Future studies with a larger population may, however, benefit from this type of data collection as a supplement to semi-structured interviews or field observation. The data from questionnaires can provide useful insights and strengthen the generalizability of the findings against the findings of this study.

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Appendices

Appendix 1. *Interview guide*

Interview guide - *Expatriates*

Introduction
- Introduce myself and informal small-talk   - Refer to the information letter and repeat information about confidentiality and anonymity. Written consent must be given before starting the interview   - Inform about recording of the interview and storage of the data

Background

4. Gender

Male	Female

5. Age

In years	

6. Nationality

Part 1. Semi-structured interview

The objective of the semi-structured interview is to explore areas such as job satisfaction, intention to stay and the onboarding process	Theory
1. Can you please briefly explain your position and job description?	
2. Which job responsibilities do you enjoy the most? Which do you least enjoy?	Perceived job satisfaction
3. How long have you been in Norway? And how long are you staying?	
4. If you did not have any specific date set in your contract, how long would you like to stay?	Intention to stay
5. How did you prepare before arriving here? Did you make a strategy or a plan? If yes, how did that work out for you?	Pre-arrival training
6. When you arrived here, did the company and your colleagues do anything to make you feel welcome and to integrate you into your new position? If yes, was	Onboarding/organizational

it formal or informal system?	support
7. Do you have any thoughts about the way you have been welcomed here? How you have been welcomed into the team and by your manager..	Onboarding/organizational support
8. So optimally, if a new college came here, what would you have wished for the colleges to do? And what would you have wished your leader would do?	Onboarding/organizational support
9. How do you enjoy living in Norway, socially? As in, outside of work?	Socialization
10. In general, how happy would you say you are with your life here? Let's say.. on a scale from 1-10?	Perceived well-being
11. Is there anything with your life here in Norway that means you may not wish to stay here over the longer term?	Intention to stay

Part 2. The Name Generator and Name Interpreter

For this part I will use a tablet and the software "Network Canvas". I will start with a brief explanation of social networks, and explain how the software works.

These are the questions used in the software:

Name generator and interpreter	Theory
1.In the past three weeks, who have you had a meaningful interaction with? By meaningful, I mean non-superficial, such as you might have with a store clark or a brief conversation with a neighbor you hardly know. A conversation with someone at the lunch table or a "like" on Facebook does not count as meaningful interaction. This interaction can be in person, by telephone or social media.	Interaction-based name generator Socialization
2. In the past two weeks, who have you gone to for advice at work? Has anyone started to come to you for advice yet?	Exchange-based name generator Advice
3. At work, who do you ask if you need suggestions about what you could do here in Ålesund or other local insights?	Exchange-based Content (at work) Information
5. Who are the people you socialize with in your free time?	Exchange-based

	Socialization
6. Are these people you can ask for advice? with regards to relocating, personal issues and so on.	Exchange-based Advice personal
7. Suppose you need to borrow some small thing like a tool, sports equipment or something similar. From who outside your household would you ask to borrow from?	Exchange-based Instrumental
8. And similarly, is there anyone who comes to you for the same reasons?	Instrumental
9. Imagine you experience something good, who do you share that joy or excitement with? And if you experience something bad, who do you share that with?	Affect-based Emotional support
10. If you wonder how things are done around here, or if you are behaving appropriately, who would you ask?"	Appraisal support

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Alter attributions

I would like you to tell me a little bit about each of the people in your network. If you are unsure, that is okay, you do not have to answer.
Man or woman? Nationality? How often do you meet them or have contact?
On 4-point scales how close do you feel to the person
(1 – distant; 2 – not close; 3 – close; 4 – intimate)

Alter relations

In this section, I am going to ask you if the people in your network know each other. For example, my mum and dad obviously know each other, but they do not know any of my friends from university. If you are unsure, that is okay, I'm just asking if you *think* they know each other. Just start with clicking on [name], and further click on the people he or she knows.

Before ending the interview

Do you have any additional information which you think could be relevant you want to share?

Any questions to the thesis in general?

Appendix 2. *Information letter to respondents*

Do you want to help ensure that employees who relocate internationally for a position have a smooth transition?

This is an invitation to participate in a research project, where we look at employees who relocate for work. As you have moved to the area, you have valuable experiences with regards to the purpose of this research project - to help identify possible success factors, pitfalls and other criteria important for a successful relocation processes.

All information you provide will be used for the sole purpose described in this document and will be treated in accordance with the privacy regulations. The information you provide will be anonymised when the project ends, planned no later than June 2023. Prior to that, you have the right at any time to have access the personal data registered about you, have personal information about you corrected or deleted or to send a complaint to the Data Protection Officer regarding the processing of your personal data. All information gathered from you is processed based on your consent. NTNU in Ålesund is responsible for the project, with supervisor Njål Andersen as project manager and Amanda Roaldsnes as Master's student. On behalf of NTNU, NSD (Data Protection Services) has assessed that the processing of personal data in this project is in accordance with data protection legislation.

Participating in the study involves a face-to-face interview of up to approx. 60 minutes (with audio recording). All information from the interview will be treated confidentially. Under no circumstances will any of your answers be shared with your employer. Participation in the project is voluntary, and you can withdraw your consent at any time without giving any reason. All your personal information will then be deleted. It will not have any negative consequences for you if you do not want to participate or later choose to withdraw.

If you have questions about the study, or want to exercise your rights, contact:

Amanda Bakken Roaldsnes by email amandabr@stud.ntnu.no.
Njål Andersen, PhD, by email njal.andersen@ntnu.no or

If you have questions related to NSD's assessment of the project, you can contact NSD by email personverntjenester@nsd.no or by phone: +47 55 58 21 17.

Appendix 3. *Consent form*

Consent form

I have received and understood information about the project and have been given the opportunity to ask questions. I give consent:

- ☐ to participate in interview with audio recording

- ☐ for my personal data to be processed until the end date of the project, approx. June 2023.

(Signed by participant, date)

Appendix 4. *Approvement from NSD (Data protection services)*

Meldeskjema / Arbeidstakere som flytter for en stilling i en internasjonal organisasj... / Vurdering

Vurdering

Referansenummer
116196

Prosjekttittel
Arbeidstakere som flytter for en stilling i en internasjonal organisasjon

Behandlingsansvarlig institusjon
Norges teknisk-naturvitenskapelige universitet / Fakultet for økonomi (ØK) / Institutt for internasjonal forretningsdrift

Prosjektansvarlig
Njål Andersen

Student
Amanda Bakken Roaldsnes

Prosjektperiode
01.04.2022 – 10.06.2023

Meldeskjema 🗗

Dato	**Type**
26.04.2022	Standard

Kommentar
OM VURDERINGEN
Personverntjenester har en avtale med institusjonen du forsker eller studerer ved. Denne avtalen innebærer at vi skal gi deg råd slik at behandlingen av personopplysninger i prosjektet ditt er lovlig etter personvernregelverket.

Personverntjenester har nå vurdert den planlagte behandlingen av personopplysninger. Vår vurdering er at behandlingen er lovlig, hvis den gjennomføres slik den er beskrevet i meldeskjemaet med dialog og vedlegg.

DEL PROSJEKTET MED PROSJEKTANSVARLIG
For studenter er det obligatorisk å dele prosjektet med prosjektansvarlig (veileder). Del ved å trykke på knappen «Del prosjekt» i menylinjen øverst i meldeskjemaet. Prosjektansvarlig bes akseptere invitasjonen innen en uke. Om invitasjonen utløper, må han/hun inviteres på nytt.

TYPE OPPLYSNINGER OG VARIGHET
Prosjektet vil behandle alminnelige kategorier av personopplysninger frem til den datoen som er oppgitt i meldeskjemaet.

LOVLIG GRUNNLAG
Prosjektet vil innhente samtykke fra de registrerte til behandlingen av personopplysninger. Vår vurdering er at prosjektet legger opp til et samtykke i samsvar med kravene i art. 4 og 7, ved at det er en frivillig, spesifikk, informert og utvetydig bekreftelse som kan dokumenteres, og som den registrerte kan trekke tilbake.
Lovlig grunnlag for behandlingen vil dermed være den registrertes samtykke, jf. personvernforordningen art. 6 nr. 1 bokstav a.

PERSONVERNPRINSIPPER
Personverntjenester vurderer at den planlagte behandlingen av personopplysninger vil følge prinsippene i personvernforordningen om:
· lovlighet, rettferdighet og åpenhet (art. 5.1 a), ved at de registrerte får tilfredsstillende informasjon om og samtykker til behandlingen
· formålsbegrensning (art. 5.1 b), ved at personopplysninger samles inn for spesifikke, uttrykkelig angitte og berettigede formål, og ikke behandles til nye, uforenlige formål
· dataminimering (art. 5.1 c), ved at det kun behandles opplysninger som er adekvate, relevante og nødvendige for formålet med prosjektet
· lagringsbegrensning (art. 5.1 e), ved at personopplysningene ikke lagres lengre enn nødvendig for å oppfylle formålet

DE REGISTRERTES RETTIGHETER
Så lenge de registrerte kan identifiseres i datamaterialet vil de ha følgende rettigheter: innsyn (art. 15), retting (art. 16), sletting (art. 17), begrensning (art. 18), og dataportabilitet (art. 20).

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Appendix 5. *NGIs for different types of support used in analysis*

Instrumental support	Emotional support	Informational support	Appraisal support
Suppose you need to borrow some small things like a tool, sports equipment, or something similar. From whom outside your household would you ask to borrow from?	Imagine you experience something good, whom do you share that joy or excitement with?	At work, whom do you ask if you need suggestions about what you could do here in Ålesund or other local insights?	If you wonder how things are done around here, or if you are behaving appropriately, who would you ask?
	And if you experience something bad, whom do you share that with?	In the past two weeks, who have you gone to for advice at work?	
	Whom do you ask for personal advice? *For instance, with regards to relocating or personal issues, etc.*		

Appendix 6. *Overview of respondents' social capital in the inital phase*

Respondent 2	Instrumental support	Emotional support	Informational support	Appraisal support
Family				
Compatriot	2	3		3
HCNs	1	1	2	1
Third-country nationals	2	2	2	1
Respondent 5				
Family		4		
Compatriot	4	1	6	2
HCNs			1	1
Third-country nationals				
Respondent 7				
Family	2	1		
Compatriot				1
HCNs	1	1	1	2
Third-country nationals				
Respondent 8				
Family		1		
Compatriot				
HCNs	2	2	3	1
Third-country				

nationals				

Note. *This table presents an overview of respondents' social capital in the initial phase and shows the types of social support provided by different alters per respondent.*

Appendix 7. *Overview of respondents' social capital in the professional integration phase*

Respondent 1	Instrumental support	Emotional support	Informational support	Appraisal support
Family		3		1
Compatriot	1			
HCNs	1			
Third-country nationals			2	2
Respondent 3				
Family		2		1
Compatriot	1	1	1	
HCNs	1			
Third-country nationals			2	2
Respondent 4				
Family		1		1
Compatriot	4	2	3	
HCNs	1		1	
Third-country nationals				2

Note. *This table presents an overview of respondents' social capital in the professional integration phase and shows the types of social support provided by different alters per respondent.*

Appendix 8. *Overview of respondents' social capital in the social integration phase*

Respondent 6	Instrumental support	Emotional support	Informational support	Appraisal support
Family		1		
Compatriot	2	4	1	1
HCNs			2	4
Third-country nationals				
Respondent 9				
Family		2		
Compatriot				
HCNs	2		2	2
Third-country nationals	4	4	5	
Respondent 10				
Family	1	1	1	1
Compatriot	7	4	1	4
HCNs	5	5	2	7
Third-country nationals	5	4	4	4

Note. *This table presents an overview of respondents' social capital in the social integration phase and shows the types of social support provided by different alters per respondent.*