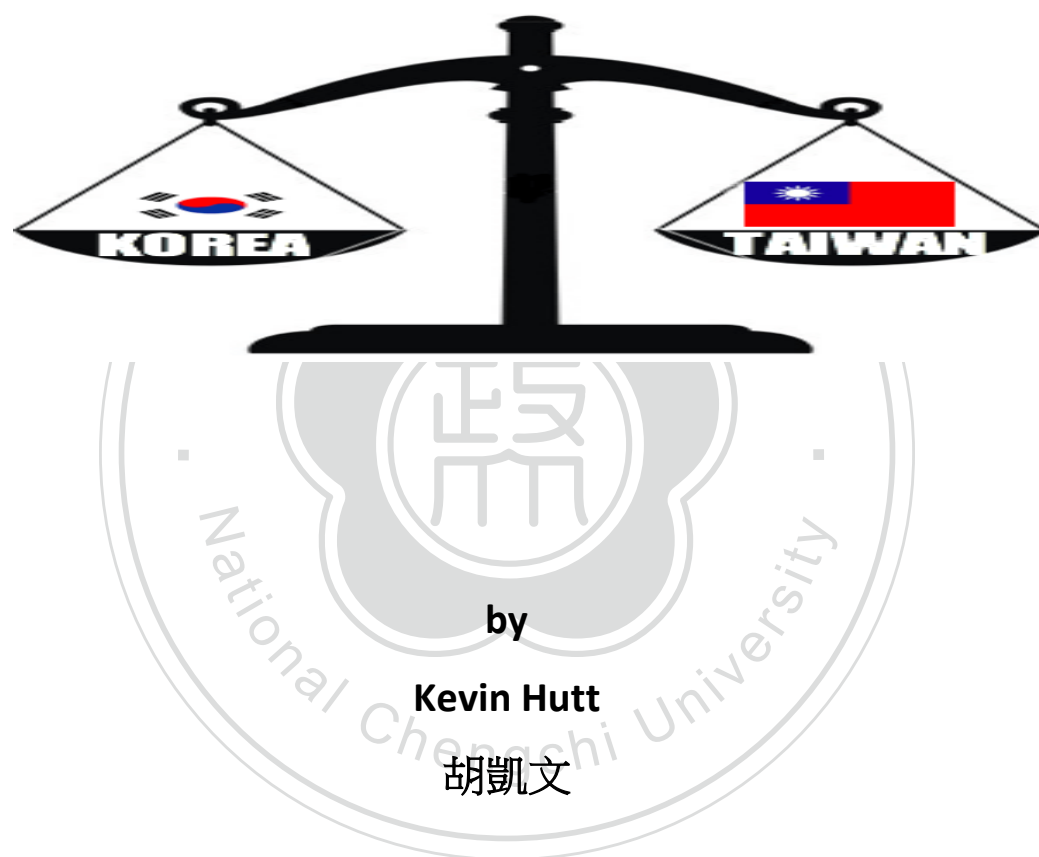


國立政治大學亞太研究英語碩士學位學程論文

How Satisfied are Expats Living in Taiwan and South Korea?



by

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碩士論文

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Abstract

The purpose of my thesis is to raise more in-depth awareness of what it is like to be an expat in Taiwan and South Korea. I did a comparative analysis between expats of South Korea and Taiwan, both quantitative and some qualitative analysis were used. The main research question in this thesis is “What are the factors that affect how well an expat is able to cross-culturally adapt in Taiwan and South Korea? And What is the relationship between these factors and the overall level of satisfaction of expats in both Taiwan and South Korea?” There have been very few formal studies which focus on Expat Satisfaction Levels in these two countries. I have lived as an Expat in Seoul, South Korea for 2 years; I was an exchange student during my undergraduate studies for 1 year and an English Teacher in a public Elementary School for 1 year as well; I have lived in Taiwan for 2 years as a Master’s Degree student while also teaching English part-time. During my time as an Expat I have seen that overall expat satisfaction levels can vary dramatically and these variations need to be revealed and not ignored. This thesis will provide a thorough and well-rounded discussion on how Expats perceive the quality of their lives in Taiwan and South Korea using both literature and statistical information.

中文摘要

我的論文的目的是增加大家對於外國人在台灣與南韓生活之差異的認識。我對於在南韓與台灣的外國人做質性與量性的比較分析。這篇論文主要的研究問題是：什麼因素會影響南韓和台灣的外國人適應跨文化的生活？這些因素相互的關係，以及外國人對於南韓與台灣整體的滿意度。以往很少有針對兩國的外國人生活滿意度的正式研究。我本身在南韓首爾生活了兩年，我在大學時當過交換學生一年，並且在公立小學當了一年的英文老師；而我在台灣研讀碩士兩年，也同時兼職教英文。作為一個外國人，我發現生活滿意度可以有很大的差異，這些差異應該被揭露，不應該被忽視。本篇論文將利用文獻以及統計資料，針對外國人如何看待他們在台灣與南韓的生活做個完整的討論。



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Chapter One: Introduction

1.1 Significance of Research

It is important to highlight that the purpose of this comparative analysis is not to show which country is better for expat life, but it is to reveal the greater variety of experiences that expats go through in both countries. This research is useful for people who are considering working or studying abroad, it will give them an idea of what factors will affect quality of their experience living abroad. This research would also be useful for study abroad advisors in universities. It is also useful for expats who are living abroad currently to be aware of how satisfied other expats are living in South Korea and Taiwan. This research is also useful for local Taiwanese and South Korean people as well because locals of a country are not always aware of what it is like to be a foreigner living in their home country. This will give locals an opportunity to not only walk in the shoes of various foreign expats but to reflect on how their own country treats and perceives different expats. This thesis will compare and contrast various categories of expat satisfaction levels for both Taiwan and South Korea using historical references, literature and data analysis.

1.2 Background Information

Taiwan and South Korea are both ranked among the Asian Tiger States in the globe. As a result, these two nations have attracted more expats over time. As of 2015, according to the Korean Ministry of Government Administration and Home Affairs, the population of foreigners in South Korea is 1.8 million; which accounts for 3.4% of the population¹. According to statistics from the Taiwan National Immigration Agency, the population of foreign expats in Taiwan is about is around 650,000 (not including mainland Chinese citizens)². Both Taiwan and South Korea have been well known for providing good education, decent job security with good pay and inexpensive healthcare. Expats in these two nations have come as students, teachers, labor workers, or even as company workers. English teaching is the most popular job for foreign expats but there's also other occupations that expats are involved in such as businesses, domestic work, restaurant ownership, etc. In South Korea, expats usually work in the public-school system or in a private cram school known as a hagwon. Whereas in Taiwan it is most common for English Teachers to work at a private cram school, known as a Buxiban and working in the public school is rare. In South Korea public schools and hagwons will provide free housing and airfare for foreign English Teachers but these benefits are not included in Taiwan; however, Taiwan has a less expensive cost of living and housing fees.

¹ 2015 Immigration Statistics Annual Report, Korea Immigration Service. Foreigner Policy Division. February 16, 2015

² Foreign Residents by Nationality, National Immigration Agency, Ministry of the Interior, 28 Dec. 2016

1.3 Methodology

There was a quantitative approach used to conduct this analysis. 60 expats were surveyed all together through an online survey system; this included 30 expats in South Korea and 30 expats in Taiwan. The expats surveyed in both Taiwan and South Korea were representative of people of different nationalities and ethnicities, socio-economic status, and various occupations. The expats surveyed came from various regions of the world such as North America, South America, Europe, West Africa, South Africa, Southeast Asia, South Asia, and East Asia. In order to conduct the survey, it was crucial to define the variables used. The independent variables included many factors such as current financial situations, quality of housing, language proficiency, lifestyle conditions back at home and marital status. The major dependent variable in this case was overall level of satisfaction as an expat. The goal was to see how do these independent variables affect the dependent variable which is overall level of expat satisfaction and to see whether there was a correlation between these variables. Overall level of expat satisfaction was scaled from 1 to 3; 1 means a low level of overall satisfaction, 2 means a medium level of satisfaction and 3 means the highest level of overall expat satisfaction. Each question on the survey was also scaled from 1 to 3. For example, for the question of "how interested are you in the local culture?" the choices were as followed; 1) not interested, 2) somewhat interested and 3) very interested. I have listed the questions used in the survey. In order to determine the correlation between the independent and dependent variables I had to use a raw marginals frequency table and count and compute percentages. I will explain more about these frequency tables in the data analysis section of my paper.

Survey Questions

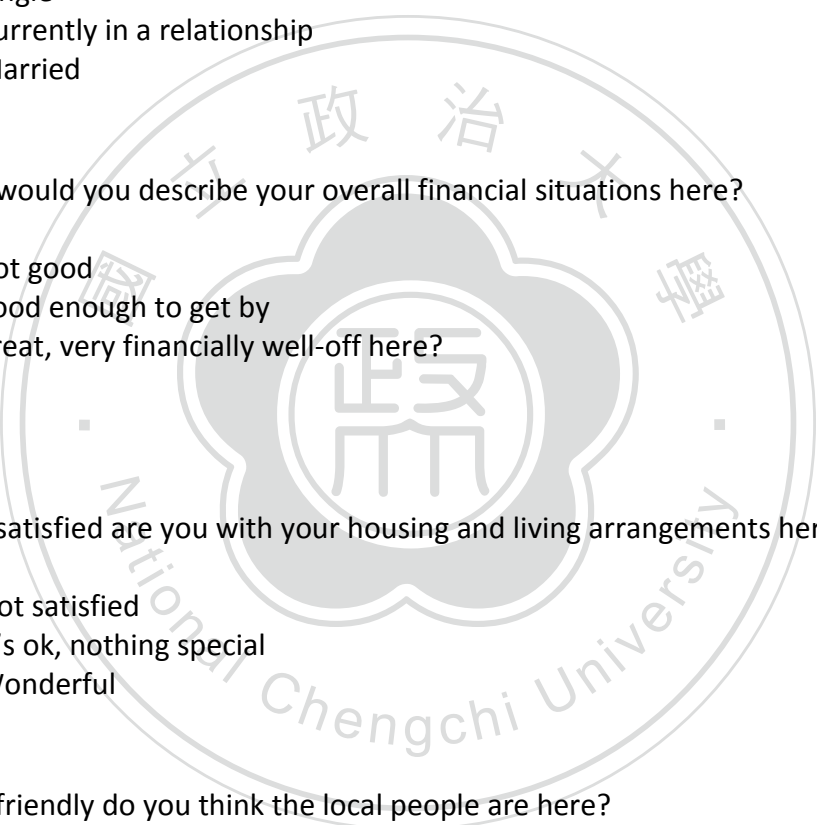
- 1) What is your overall level of proficiency in Chinese/ Korean?
 - 1) Beginner
 - 2) Intermediate and conversational
 - 3) Advanced

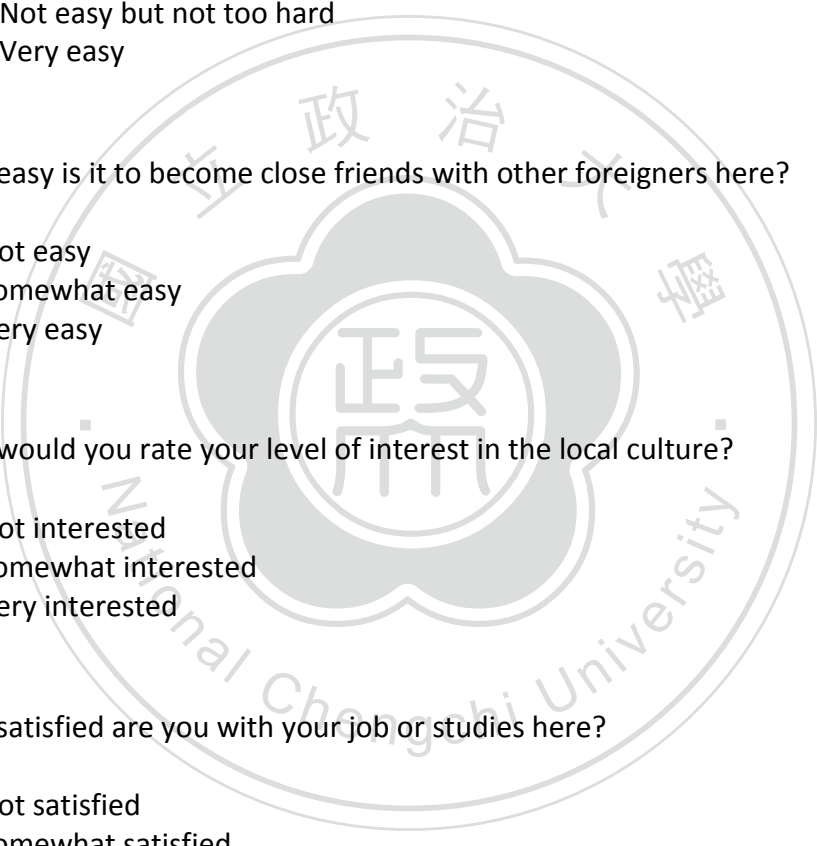
 - 2) What is your relationship status?
 - 1) Single
 - 2) Currently in a relationship
 - 3) Married

 - 3) How would you describe your overall financial situations here?
 - 1) not good
 - 2) good enough to get by
 - 3) great, very financially well-off here?

 - 4) How satisfied are you with your housing and living arrangements here?
 - 1) Not satisfied
 - 2) It's ok, nothing special
 - 3) Wonderful

 - 5) How friendly do you think the local people are here?
 - 1) Not friendly
 - 2) Somewhat friendly
 - 3) Very friendly

 - 6) How socially conservative do think the society is here?
 - 1) Not conservative
 - 2) Somewhat conservative
 - 3) Very conservative
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- 7) How adventurous are you? Do you always like to explore new things?
- 1) Not adventurous
 - 2) Somewhat adventurous
 - 3) Very adventurous
- 8) How easy is it to become close friends with the locals here?
- 1) Not easy
 - 2) Not easy but not too hard
 - 3) Very easy
- 9) How easy is it to become close friends with other foreigners here?
- 1) Not easy
 - 2) Somewhat easy
 - 3) Very easy
- 10) How would you rate your level of interest in the local culture?
- 1) Not interested
 - 2) Somewhat interested
 - 3) Very interested
- 11) How satisfied are you with your job or studies here?
- 1) Not satisfied
 - 2) Somewhat satisfied
 - 3) Very satisfied
- 12) How are lifestyle conditions back in your hometown? Including financial stability, safety, job opportunities, liveliness, relations with family and friends, convenience, safety, etc.
- 1) Not good
 - 2) Good, but not necessarily amazing
 - 3) Wonderful
- 
- The image contains a large, faint watermark of the National Chengchi University logo. The logo is circular and features a central emblem with the Chinese characters '政大' (Chengchi University) inside a stylized flower shape. The text 'National Chengchi University' is written around the bottom half of the circle, and '國立政治大學' is written around the top half.

13) What is your expected length of stay here?

- 1) I'll be leaving very soon
- 2) Not sure yet, I'll stay as long as I can.
- 3) I'm staying here forever.

14) How satisfied are you overall with your life as an expat here?

- 1) Not satisfied
- 2) Somewhat satisfied
- 3) Highly satisfied



1.4 Limitations

Although I plan to do extensive research and analyze qualitative data there are some limitations. One of my limitations is that I am not able to interview expats from every region of the South Korea and Taiwan; most of the Expats that I will interview will be living in the capital cities of Taipei and Seoul. Although I will include Expats with different occupations most of the expats that I will interview will be students and English Teachers from the programs that I have participated in. The expats that were surveyed from South Korea were mostly English Teachers in the public-school system whereas most expats surveyed in Taiwan were students; however, many of the students also taught English in addition to study so they were able to relate to both studying and working in Taiwan. Another limitation is that for some of my independent variables I was not able to target an equal number of participants that fit under each category since the surveys were distributed randomly. However, despite my limitations I am confident that the results from my data analysis are well representative of the majority of expats in Taiwan and South Korea.

1.5 Historical Background

When it comes to analyzing the satisfaction levels of expats in South Korea and Taiwan, it is critical to compare the history of these two nations. Understanding and analyzing the history of these two nations allows one to gain a deeper insight of contemporary society. The history of a nation has a great impact on the sense of national identity and the attitude towards foreigners. First, I will describe important historical facts in South Korea which is relevant to the country's national identity and perception of foreigners. I will describe relevant points in history even before North and South Korea became divided. Unfortunately, most history within South Korea's regarding foreigners is not a positive memory because the country experienced many invasions from external forces. Korea has experienced 900 invasions throughout 2,000 years' worth of history. Korea first had Mongolian invasion in 1231 until the early 14th century. Then In 1592, the Japanese warlord Toyotomi Hiyedoshi invaded Korea with the intention of taking over China. China did eventually help Korea defeat Toyotomi Hiyedoshi but the country was still traumatized by war at that time³.

One important event to highlight in Korea's history is that throughout the 16th and 17th century Korea called the 'hermit kingdom' because it had closed all contact with foreign nations. During that period, it did not really conduct trade with the outside world, it chose to withdraw because it had been occupied by so many external forces. In addition to feeling that there was not much they could gain from foreign contact, they also hoped that this tactic would help ensure the country's security. Even though Korea was the 'Hermit Kingdom' and closed of

³ Frank, Ruildiger, James E. Hoare, Patrick Koillner, and Susan Pares. *Korea 2013: Politics, Economy and Society*. Leiden: Brill, 2013.

foreign contact, this eventually came to an end when Western countries and Japan came over and forcibly forced the country to open. Meanwhile, there was armed conflict with the Japanese, Chinese, and Russians and they dominated the Korean Peninsula⁴.

The Japanese ruled over Korea from 1910-1945 and of course their rule was regarded as harsh and oppressive. But even after the Japanese surrendered in 1945 and World War II had ended, the country was still in a lot of turmoil. The country was divided into zones by the USA and Soviet Union, which is basically communism fighting against capitalism. In 1948 two separate governments were established in the Korean Peninsula; the Republic of Korea in Seoul, in the American Zone, and the Democratic People's Republic of Korea in Pyongyang, in the Soviet Zone. And then in 1950, North Korea invaded the South⁵. The Korean War drew in the Americans in support of South Korea and the Chinese in support of the North. So, what you see here is that Korea was going through constant invasions, even after the brutal Japanese occupation they had to deal with the Korean war as well; it is almost as if they didn't have a break from being invaded by armed forces throughout history.

Starting in the late 19th there was the ideology of nationalism which began in the Korean Peninsula. This ideology was not just constructed from the original culture itself but it was sparked by the challenge of external forces invading the country. According to Scholar Lee Kwang-Rin of Korean Studies, "In response to confrontation with Japan and Western nations during the latter half of the 1800s, three prominent ideologies developed in Korea: the " defend

⁴ O'hanlon, Michael, and Mike Mochizuki. *Crisis on the Korean peninsula*. McGraw Hill Professional, 2003.

⁵ Stueck, William. *The Korean War: an international history*. Princeton University Press, 1997.

orthodoxy, ban heterodoxy (wijong choksa), enlightenment (kaehwa 開化), and Eastern learning (tonghak 東學) movements”⁶. These purposes of these ideologies was to re-establish and distinguish Korean Identity as well as study the traditional values and teachings of Confucianism. These ideologies were part of the nation’s reaction to colonialism and provided a foundation for growing nationalism in the future. Koreans felt that they needed to clearly emphasize and protect their identity and make themselves distinct from foreigners.

When Korea was colonized they also faced difficulties to seek independence against the imperial Japan, Russia and China. They Korean nationalist formed governments in exile, armies and secret groups to fight imperialism wherever they were. Over time, the Korean people have developed a sense of national identity based on shared blood an ancestry. Korean people established the concept of a “unitary nation” 單一民族 (tanil minjok), which means that their society is ethnically homogenous and distinct from other nations⁷. One of main purposes of this concept was for the Korean people to portray their autonomy. The emphasized the importance of their ethnic blood for defining their nationally. In fact, this was especially important under Japanese colonial rule, because the Japanese tried to assimilate the Korean people into their own empire; however, the were treated as inferior beings during this time. When the Japanese imposed assimilation they required the Korean people to use Japanese surnames and to speak and write Japanese in their daily lives. It is interesting that this was a similar situation in Taiwan,

⁶ Kwang-rin, Lee. "The Rise of Nationalism in Korea." *Korean Studies* (1986): 1-12.

⁷ Robinson, Michael Edson. *Cultural nationalism in colonial Korea, 1920-1925*. University of Washington Press, 2014.

when Taiwan was under Japanese colonization. But we will later see that the response of Japanese Colonization was extremely different between Taiwan and South Korea in the long-run.

After the country got independence from Japan in 1945, there was still a lot of confusion and turmoil, the people felt they needed to re-establish their identity again; but not only were they dealing with this, they also had to deal with the divided Korea shortly afterwards. Even though the 2 Korea became divided, they still enforced that their nation was ethnically homogenous. Nationalism even continues to serve as a key foundation in Korean politics and foreign relations. Starting in the 1960s South Korea had an authoritarian form of government under the dictator Park Chung Hee. President Park Chung-Hee emphasized the ideology 單一民族 and racial purity to inspire the people during his ruling⁸. Meanwhile, this concept transitioned into daily politics, culture and society. There is some controversy nowadays that the emphasis on the purity of Korean blood has caused tensions in terms of multi-ethnicity and has even sparked some xenophobia.

Nationalism has been an important form of inspiration for the Korean people as they went through the difficult times of colonialism, the Korean War, having an authoritarian regime and eventually modernizing. The effects of this history is present in modern South Korean Society, the people have made a phrase called “Korean Pride”; and when you travel to South Korea nowadays you can see that people emphasize this term as an important factor for their modern identity. In the Korean language, there is a term 우리 나라(我國) which means “our

⁸ Frank, Ruilidiger, James E. Hoare, Patrick Koillner, and Susan Pares. *Korea 2013: Politics, Economy and Society*. Leiden: Brill, 2013.

country” is used frequently to describe everything associated with their culture, however this type of terminology is not used in Taiwan.

Taiwan has different history than Korea, which may justify the difference in terms of the attitude towards foreigners. Taiwan had a frontier mentality, people immigrated there as settlers from diverse backgrounds and Taiwan did not have a royal hierarchical structure that was based on an emperor like Korea did. Already when the Portuguese first arrived they named the Taiwan ‘Formosa’, the beautiful Island; and that term is still used to describe Taiwan today⁹. In fact, most Taiwanese people see themselves as guest to the Formosa island. Even though colonization is not usually regarded as a good thing, we can see here that the influence of Colonization is quite different from the numerous invasions of Korea. Taiwan was regarded as a strategic location for trading. The Dutch occupation in Taiwan brought scientific and technological advances and other trade developments. In terms of the aborigines, the Dutch even allowed them to live their lives freely but paying tax tributes. The Dutch also played roles in converting aboriginals to Christianity and Romanizing aboriginal languages¹⁰. Taiwan was never established as an independent country like the 2 Koreas were. National identity in Taiwan is inherently more complex and diverse; often the terms ‘Chinese’ and ‘Taiwanese’ are used interchangeably when talking about the culture, language, literature, history, etc. Taiwan also has aborigines who were the first settlers of the Island, and has been regarded as a linguistic center for Austronesian Languages. Taiwan also has a variety of languages such as Mandarin, Taiwanese, Hakka and even Indigenous Languages; so, it is naturally more multi-cultural

⁹ Rubinstein, Murray A. *Taiwan: A new history*. Routledge, 2015.

¹⁰ Wills Jr, John E. "Taiwan Under the Dutch and the Cheng Regime." *Taiwan: A new history* (1999): 84-106.

linguistically, culturally and historically. There is no such thing as the concept of (tan-il minjok) in Taiwanese society. Taiwan seems to take slightly more appreciation for its diversity in society; they retained historical sites from Dutch East India and Spaniard colonizers such as Fort Santo Domingo (紅毛城) in Tamsui. In South Korea, you will never see a historical site like this because all the historical sites represent the pure Korean Society. So we can see that the historical background of South Korea and Taiwan is very different, understanding the history of different countries can really help to gain deeper understanding of modern cultural identity.



Chapter 2: Literature Review

Since we have examined the history of both Korea and Taiwan we can understand the foundations of the culture and mentality of the society on a greater level. Now we can look at modern day literature and statistics which measures the levels of satisfaction among expats in South Korea and Taiwan; these statistics were conducted under a quantitative analysis approach and provide useful information. In terms of global ranking of Expat Satisfaction, one source that really inspired me was a world-renowned system called “InterNations; Expat Insider”, which is the largest expat survey system in the world. This survey system does a detailed analysis of expat life in more than 180 countries around the world and surveys more than 15,000 people from different countries; usually they will do online survey sampling of around 50-100 people per country. This system measures factors such as quality of life, safety, cost of living, ease of settling in, Family life, work life to measure the level of happiness of expats. According to InterNations; Expats Insider, Taiwan has been ranked as the top place for Expats in 2016; More than 85% of Expats were satisfied with their living and financial situations in Taiwan in comparison to the global average of 64%. Taiwan has ranked the highest in terms of the affordability of its healthcare and the low cost of living expenses. In terms of Expats that work in Taiwan, Taiwan scored second place in the working abroad index category. Over one-third of expats in Taiwan (34%) are completely satisfied with their jobs, more than double the global average of 16%. Expats were very content about their work-life balance (30%) and job Security (34%). According to InterNations, the majority of Expats in Taiwan (64%) plan to stay there longer than three years; with more than half of these (36% in total) even

considering staying there forever. Also in terms of friendliness of local residents towards foreigners, 9/10 people gave Taiwan a positive rating for that category¹¹.

However, in South Korea the statistics are quite different. In terms of Working Abroad Index, South Korea ranks #22 out of 67 countries in 2016. Also, when measuring the quality of job satisfaction, South Korea ranks in 37th place¹². South Korea does still have a similar system in Taiwan with affordable health care and convenient transportation systems though. It seems like the overall trend in South Korea is an “All work and no play” style of work life, many expats claiming that they work excessive amounts of hours and do not have a good work-life balance. I will discuss later on in the Literature Review about the working circumstances among Expats in South Korea, especially ESL Teachers.

In 2003, there was a study conducted by scholars from the Netherlands on expat satisfaction in Taiwan and it was called “Study of Adjustment of Western Expatriates in Taiwan ROC with the Multicultural Personality Questionnaire”. The Authors come from the University of Amsterdam and University of Groningen, and this article was published in the *Asian Journal of Social Psychology*. In this study, these scholars conducted a survey among 102 Expats in Taiwan and they targeted specific employers which hired expats as well as the European Chamber of Commerce in Taipei. This survey also asked expats their age, nationality, gender and time spent in Taiwan. The Expats in this study came from the countries of the Netherlands,

¹¹ Grossman, Vera, The Best & Worst Places for Expats in 2016. InterNations: Expat Insider July 4, 2016.

¹² Expatriates in South Korea, InterNations: Expat Insider 2016, July 4, 2016

USA, France and the U.K. This study mentions that when discussing expat satisfaction levels in Taiwan it is important to highlight the adjustment process that expatriates go through and that includes sociocultural adjustment, personal adjustment and professional adjustment. Personal adjustment is about internal and psychological factors such as mental health and personal satisfaction. Personal adjustment is defined in terms of satisfaction with life, physical health, and psychological health. Sociocultural adjustment refers to “external psychological outcomes that link individuals to their new context such as the ability to deal with daily problems, particularly in the areas of family life and work” (Mol, 4). Social adjustment was measured by social support by peers in the host country. Professional adjustment means the amount of satisfaction with the new work environment in the host country. This study claims that the other most important factors for measuring Expat Satisfaction include Cultural empathy, open-mindedness, social initiative, emotional stability and flexibility. Cultural Empathy has the same meaning of ‘Cultural Sensitivity’ in this case. This term refers to the ability to be sensitive to the feelings, thoughts, and behaviors of people from different cultural backgrounds. In theory, high levels of cultural empathy will imply higher levels of expat satisfaction compared to those with low levels of cultural empathy. The second factor, open-mindedness refers to the ability to have an open and unprejudiced attitude towards others with different cultural norms and values. The levels of open-mindedness is crucial for being able to adjust to different customs and lifestyle conditions. Usually expats with high levels of open-mindedness usually find different customs and values to be exciting and interesting. Third, social-initiative, is defined as a tendency to approach social situations in an active way and to take initiatives. Many scholars have emphasized the importance of the ability to establish and maintain contacts with people

from the host country and of making friends among the locals. This factor might imply that the more socially outgoing an Expat is the more likely they are to be satisfied with their lives abroad. The factor of emotional stability means the tendency to remain calm in stressful situations compared to showing strong emotional reactions under stressful situations. It especially takes a lot of emotional stability to endure living abroad in a culture that is completely different from your own, many expats may find that their levels of emotional stability and gratitude becomes higher after living abroad. Flexibility is also extremely important because when you are working and living abroad as an Expat you need to be able to adjust easily from one strategy to another, because the familiar ways of handling things will not necessarily work in a new cultural environment. In all three aspects, emotional stability appeared most consistently as predictor of adjustment. Social initiative was an additional strong predictor of psychological well-being, and so was cultural empathy of satisfaction with life and of the amount of social support in the host country. Flexibility was a predictor of job satisfaction and social support. The main idea of this study was that expatriates with high levels of cultural empathy, open-mindedness, social initiative, emotional stability, and flexibility would be more suitable to adapt in a foreign environment. The correlation between open-mindedness and cultural empathy was the highest among the adjustment process. This article also claimed that marital status has an important impact of expat adjustment. Married expatriates showed higher levels psychological and physical health than expatriates who were single. This study also revealed that in terms of age, older expatriates tended to more satisfied

with their work than younger expatriates and that those who were not satisfied with their jobs were more likely to leave the country¹³.

Chapter 3: The Expat Adjustment Process

3.1 Cycle of Culture Shock

Now what have had an overview some statistical information and literature regarding Expat satisfaction it important to highlight the theories of what an Expat is and what they go through. Most Expats that come to work or study in Taiwan and South Korea, come from a different cultural background where they speak different languages and have strong cultural differences. Even an Expat coming from a different region of Asia such as Southeast or South Asia may encounter some cultural differences that they need to adjust to living in Taiwan or South Korea. The term expat is defined as a person who is temporarily or permanently residing, as an immigrant, in a foreign country. When an expat comes to Taiwan or South Korea to reside, depending on where they are originally from, they will naturally experience some cultural adjustment phases. For westerners, this cultural adjustment is based on some general principles of cross-cultural differences. One thing that most expats usually experience while living abroad in a different culture is culture shock; however, the extent or level of culture shock varies drastically from person to person. For some people, culture shock may just simply the language barrier and some small cultural differences, so it doesn't really concern them that

¹³ Mol, Stefan Thomas, and Jan Oudenhoven. *A Study of the Adjustment of Western Expatriates in Taiwan ROC with the Multicultural Personality Questionnaire (MPQ)*; *Asian Journal of Social Psychology*, 2003

much. However, for other people culture shock might be as severe as not feeling like you belong in the society, feeling like you can't relate to the mainstream society's ways of thinking, having tensions with work or personal relationships. Overall, culture shock has about 4 phases or stages of experience. The first stage of culture shock is called the "Honeymoon Stage", this is the stage in which it's the persons' first time to visit the new country so everything is new. Usually tourist and travelers experience this phase, which is why they usually take several pictures and try several new things. When you are in the honeymoon stage, you are motivated to make the most out of your short time in the new country, so you often don't have time to feel culture shock.

The next stage of culture shock is called the "frustration stage", this is a stage that every expat has experienced living in a totally different culture, even if they don't admit it directly. Frustration stage means that you feel a little fatigued dealing with language barriers, not being able to communicate your thoughts fully, and dealing with customs and ways of thinking which is different from your own culture¹⁴. Small things such as misunderstandings, different rules and policies, being stared at and singled out as a foreigner may trigger some frustration. During the frustration stage, the culture is no longer brand new and the culture just becomes part of ordinary and everyday life. Usually the honeymoon stage tends to last longer for individuals who have never studied the language or been exposed to the culture before arriving. In my personal experience, I had grown up in a Taiwanese and Korean community back in America and had studied those languages for several years before I arrived for the first time in South

¹⁴ Ward, Colleen, Stephen Bochner, and Adrian Furnham. *The psychology of culture shock*. Routledge, 2005.

Korea and Taiwan; thus, the honeymoon phase was much shorter for me compared to other expats who have never been exposed to Taiwanese and Korean culture before. The next stage of culture shock is called the 'Adjustment Stage' in which you become more familiar with the language, culture and the customs and the new environment. Usually during the adjustment stage expats try to take language courses so they can practice speaking the language in everyday life, they also tend to make more connections with locals and other expats; these connections makes them feel more comfortable abroad. The final stage of culture shock is called the 'acceptance stage', and this does not necessarily mean that you totally understand and accept the new culture. The acceptance stage is the stage in which you form your own view as to whether or not the country or culture is suitable for you personally. Once you've reached the acceptance stage you've already had plenty of experiences to know the locals, the local customs and the ways of thinking. From this point on expats make the decision of whether they want to continue to immerse themselves in the different culture or even continue to stay in the country.

3.2 Society and Cultural Differences

Taiwan and South Korea can both be classified as Confucian Societies which have cultures based on the general principles of Confucianism. My theory is that every Expat who doesn't come from a society based on Confucian values will experience some degree of culture shock in Taiwan and South Korea. Countries which particularly have Confucian values include East Asian nations such as Japan, Hong Kong, China, Macau; As well as some Southeast Asian countries, such as Singapore, Malaysia and perhaps even Vietnam to some extent. Through my experiences of being an Expat in both Taiwan and South Korea I have discovered that Expats

from these countries, which share similar Confucian values, were less likely to experience culture shock compared to other Expats not from these regions. In fact, while I was living in South Korea and Taiwan I even heard locals from both countries say that they share many of the same cultural values and ways of thinking; just do a different degree.

One of the main culture differences between Western societies and Taiwanese/Korean Society is the type of communication. Korea and Taiwan are considered high-context cultures, in which communication is based on interpreting the context of a situation and is often indirect. Western Societies are considered low-context cultures, which means that communication is often conducted in a direct way with verbal language. For example, with Eastern European countries such as Russia and Serbia the way of communication is totally the opposite; in their culture people are very direct and it is common to openly speak however you feel in many situations. However, if that person comes to South Korea or Taiwan and applies the same style of communication they are more likely to experience culture shock; they may even be perceived as rude by some local South Koreans or Taiwanese if they are too direct. Earlier I talked about Korea's history and how nationalism and pride became an important motivation for establishing their national identity and culture. After living in South Korea for 2 years, I discovered that because of this the locals are especially very sensitive to receiving direct criticism about their country or culture; you have to be extra careful about what you say or you could get a really bad reaction. Another significant cross-culture difference is that Taiwan and South Korea are collectivist/group think societies, whereas many western countries are individualistic societies. Actually to some extent the individualistic nature of some expats suits them well living abroad because they don't mind figuring out how to adjust to the society by

themselves and being independent. But I will explain how one might experience culture shock in this situation. In a group-think society, what happens is the decisions that one person makes may not only depend on them but in may depend on a group or someone of higher authority. In a Confucian society individual's decision-making is especially influenced by their family. For example, it is not uncommon for someone to suddenly cancel plans with a friend because of family affairs came up unexpectedly¹⁵. However, from the eyes of a westerner this would be perceived as rude unless it is an important situation and the friend promises to make it up later. A westerner might think that think that this person does not take them seriously and is inconsiderate if they just cancel at the last minute and don't make up for it later. Although westerners do also believe that family comes first, because of the ideology of individualism we will try not to let family affairs interfere or conflict with individual priorities. Another key thing to note about a group-think society that is very homogeneous it may be difficult for some foreigners to feel like they are fully accepted into the society; this can make it difficult to make close connections with the locals. For example, if a foreigner encounters a local Taiwanese or South Korean person that doesn't speak English well and isn't used to being around foreigners they may find it difficult to relate; this is not only because of the language barrier but also strong cultural differences in terms of ways of thinking. A local Taiwanese or South Korean may feel reluctant to become close friends with a foreign expat and prefer to stick with their own native group of people instead. If an expat is put in environment where these are the only

¹⁵ Pedersen, Paul. *Five Stages of Culture Shock, The: Critical Incidents Around the World: Critical Incidents Around the World*. ABC-CLIO, 1994.

kinds of locals he meets, then he will probably not indicate that the local people are 'friendly' when doing an evaluation for expat satisfaction.

Thus, the way of thinking and mentality of these cultures can differ significantly. Even though these may seem like general cultural differences, the extent to which an expat can deal with these cross-cultural difference affects their level of satisfaction as an expat. Being an expat is significantly different from being a tourist, because a tourist only needs to travel leisurely in the country for a short period; but an expat must learn to adjust and make a foreign society their home while they are there. The longer an expat stays in a foreign country, the more they understand the culture in detail and they are better able to form their own perspective of expat life in the country.

3.3 Expats Studying Abroad

Since we have highlighted important principles of cross-cultural differences, we can briefly talk about how this applies to Academic environments, because many expats come to Taiwan and South Korea as both degree and exchange students. Many students who come to Taiwan or South Korea for studying nowadays have the privilege of taking classes in English with other International Students; this helps them to feel much more comfortable. University students may undergo some minor adaptation processes for adjusting to student life abroad. They must learn to adapt in a new environment, to live independently, and work with new and unfamiliar people. Not only are they students in an academic environment but they also need to figure out how to adjust to the mainstream society, especially on a social level. This process of adjusting can be both a positive or negative experience for students. international students

who have good connections with people from their home country or other international students tend to be the happiest¹⁶. One of the reasons for this is that many international students feel they don't always have full support from their university or from local students. Many international students mentioned that because universities don't always reach out to them directly, they rely on each other for support and advice for things such as accommodation and navigating university resources.

Chapter 4: English Teachers in Taiwan and South Korea

4.1 English Teachers in Taiwan

In Taiwan, there are 3 main systems for expats to teach English. The first system is in a cram school which is known as a buxiban, which is the most common form of teaching in Taiwan. Buxibans in Taiwan have gotten mixed reviews from expats, especially with cram schools like HESS; some expats claimed that they were overworked and didn't have much free time, while others were pleased with having a well-balanced work life. The second form is in a public school, and this is rare in Taiwan; in Taiwan native English teachers that teach in a public school are usually required to have a teaching license or some type of exceptional qualification. The third system is very new, but it is teaching English online for companies such as Tutor4u and TutorABC¹⁷. This system is becoming more popular because it offers flexible hours and is

¹⁶ Chapdelaine, Raquel Faria, and Louise R. Alexitch. "Social skills difficulty: Model of culture shock for international graduate students." *Journal of College Student Development* 45.2 (2004): 167-184.

¹⁷ Cheng, Hsing-Fu, and Zoltán Dörnyei. "The use of motivational strategies in language instruction: The case of EFL teaching in Taiwan." *International Journal of Innovation in Language Learning and Teaching* 1.1 (2007): 153-174.

very flexible with teaching styles. In my own experience of working with these companies, I must say that it was amazing. With this online English learning program you work with Taiwanese locals from all over Taiwan and even overseas and the company provides you with the lesson plan already. The teacher has a lot of flexibility to teach the lesson however they desire, as long as the customer is satisfied. These companies have gotten excellent reviews amongst the expat community because they offer both part time and full time positions with good pay. Public school teachers in Taiwan have been very pleased with their work experience; their job is stable and they feel as though they are treated on an equal level with other Native Taiwanese teachers. Native English teachers in the Taiwanese schools have mentioned that they do have a Co-Teacher in their classroom while they are teaching, but they Co-Teacher looks up to the Native English teacher and feels that having them is a luxury for them. From an economic perspective one of the main differences of English teaching in Taiwan versus South Korea is that in Taiwan accommodation and airfare is not included in the teaching contract. But the housing and living expenses in Taiwan are famous for being cheap.

4.2 English Teachers in Korea

Most expats in South Korea are English teachers. There are mostly 2 forms of English teaching in South Korea, which including teaching at a public school or a private institution. With the public-school system, there are 2 main systems which allow foreign expats to teach; these include EPIK (English Program in Korea) and TALK (Teach and Learn in Korea), EPIK is for the metropolitan cities and TALK is for the countryside locations. These systems are all

sponsored by the Korean government and the Ministry of Education in each district. These systems all recruit English teachers from the English-Speaking countries of Canada, USA, U.K, Ireland, Australia, New Zealand and South Africa. These systems have great benefits such as free housing, free healthcare, paid airfare, and 22 days of vacation per year; the pay is 2 million Korean won per month, which is about \$2,000 USD. These public-school systems currently have a policy that an English teacher can stay at a school for a maximum of 2 years, after that they must be relocated to another school if they want to stay in these programs¹⁸. Most expats claim that the public-school system of teaching is more reliable and stable than teaching in a private school system; under the public-school contract all the teachers have protected rights which can't be guaranteed in a private institution.

ESL Teachers in South Korea are not required to have a teaching license, they are just required to get a teaching certificate called TEFL, from an online teaching course. However, studies have shown that teachers who have teaching-licenses or teaching degrees tend to be more successful and satisfied with their job than those who don't. One of the reasons for this is that expats who had a teaching degree were more comfortable with the principles of teaching ESL and how to manage a classroom, since they studied this in their undergraduate or graduate program. Also, the school that they were placed in showed more respect for them and saw them as dedicated and skilled teachers.

I would like to discuss some of the challenges that English teachers in the Public-School system face in South Korea. First, English teachers in South Korean Public Schools are labeled as

¹⁸ Chin, Cheongsook. "Native English-speaking teachers' perceptions of learning and teaching EFL in Korea." *English Teaching* 57.2 (2002): 113-135.

'guest native-teachers' which means that they don't have the same status as a Korean native teacher in the public schools; one of the reasons is because they are not licensed under the Korean Ministry of Education and they are teaching temporarily at the school under a short-term contract. Guest Native Teachers are placed with what is called a "Co-Teacher" who is a native Korean teacher that works with them in the classroom; technically speaking, all Guest Native Teachers are required to have a Co-Teacher always.

Guest Native-Teachers are required to attend an orientation, which is 1 week long, before they begin teaching; this is an opportunity to learn about the principles of teaching and to network with other English teachers. In my own experience as a teacher with the EPIK program, I have seen that at the orientation they describe the Co-Teacher as someone who helps you to translate and manage the behavior of the classroom. They present this idea to seem like the guest native teacher and the co-teacher will be working together as equal partners, but after the orientation many guest native teachers discovered that this was not always the case. In fact, the true reality is that the Co-Teacher is your boss and has complete authority of the classroom. So, your experience teaching in the public schools is entirely based on your Co-Teacher, and every Co-Teacher has a different personality. Some Co-Teachers are very meticulous and require the guest native teacher to do things their way, while others will let the guest native teacher teach independently without having any disagreements. However, one important thing that has not been mentioned at orientations is that the Co-Teacher has complete authority of the classroom; so, if there is ever a disagreement, the guest native teacher does not have any authority in the end. In the Korean and East Asian general work culture, there is a strong emphasis on hierarchy in the work environment. People pay very

strong attention to your job position, level of experience and who has the ultimate authority and power. One critique that many guest native teachers have made is that 'Co-teaching' confuses the students because they are not always clear on which teacher has the highest level of authority; there have been situations where the Co-Teacher disagreed with a guest native teacher directly in front of the class, and suddenly changed everything. Overall, teachers in the public-school system of South Korea have had mixed feelings about their experience as teachers. Some guest native teachers felt like their Co-Teachers were totally supportive of them and that they were equal partners, while others felt that their Co-Teacher dominated the classroom and just gave them orders of how to manage everything. Earlier we discussed about some major cultural differences between Eastern and Western cultures, and in this experience, there are 2 differences which are crucial to note. One of them is the type of communication, East Asian cultures tend to be very indirect and this was evident in aspects such as job expectations and job hierarchy. When I first attended an orientation with EPIK, I noticed that they were very indirect when talking about job hierarchy; they didn't want to tell the guest native teachers directly that the Co-Teacher has the ultimate authority in the end. Another culture difference which many guest native teachers mentioned is with teaching, in East Asia the teacher places a stronger emphasis on the textbook than in western societies. So, if the guest native teacher wants to do a lesson plan which slightly deviates from the textbook they have a high chance having encountering disagreement from their Co-teacher. An important thing to note about ESL in Korean public school systems is that the government is starting to do budget cuts and is gradually reducing the number of guest native teachers; it has also been

shown that native Korean Co-teachers feel that guest native teachers are not as needed for accomplishing their Academic goals.

4.3 Private Hagwons in South Korea

The other system of teaching English in South Korea is at a private language institute, this is called a Hagwon in the Korean language. Many expats who work at a Hagwon also get similar benefits in the public schools such as the same pay (sometimes even higher), free accommodation and airfare. Most teachers who work at a hagwon start in the afternoon and end in the late evening (2pm-9pm), sometimes they must work overtime. People who work at Hagwons have shorter vacation time, usually around 11 days per year; although this may vary depending on the company. The biggest difference between teaching in the public schools versus a Hagwon is that a Hagwon is a private business, so the Korean government does not have control on their policies of how they manage things. The ultimate goal for people who run hagwons is to please the customer, whereas in public schools it is to teach the educational goal regardless of how the students feel¹⁹.

Studies have shown that the hagwon industry in South Korea as experienced many problems. It has been shown that many hagwons have discriminatory hiring practices which is based on race, nationality, gender, looks, and not only level of experiences²⁰. It was not uncommon for some hagwons to mention in their advertisements that they were only looking for a Caucasian teacher. Many hagwon companies claimed that hiring people of color or of

¹⁹ Chin, Cheongsook. "Native English-speaking teachers' perceptions of learning and teaching EFL in Korea." *English Teaching* 57.2 (2002): 113-135.

²⁰ Henry, Meagan J. "Hagwons, Future Careers in TESL? A Qualitative Study about the Career Choices of the Multiple Year Private School English Teachers in South Korea." (2016).

other ethnicities would cause some dissatisfaction from parents who send their kids to Hagwons. Parents who send their kids to hagwons invest in a lot of money, and some of them are very particular about what they want. As a result, the expectations of English Teachers are very high and the work is very demanding. Other issues with Hagwons were that it was not always guaranteed that the employer would follow their contract completely, sometimes an English Teacher's pay would be delayed or they didn't receive all the compensations they were supposed to receive. In this situation, the Korean government can't really intervene to deal with any issues of instability.

Here are some statistics from a survey in 2015 which show what are the main reasons why expats came to South Korea to teach English in Hagwons. Of all the expats that teach English in South Korea, 27% of them came for the opportunity to get international travel, while 25% of them came for the experience to teach English as a second language, 36% came for the job benefits and because they couldn't find adequate work in their home country, and the remaining 12% came because of relationship reasons or a recommendation from a friend. This shows that most expats who come to teach English don't plan to stay in ESL permanently. Expats who came specifically for teaching ESL generally had better teaching experiences, because they had more training and confidence with teaching²¹.

Some teachers had very good experiences at hagwons, they had great relationships with their bosses and students. Also, students at Hagwons tend to be more advanced in English

²¹ Alpaugh, Michael Craig. "Native English speaking teachers at Hagwons in South Korea: an investigation into their expectations, motivations, beliefs, and realities". *University of Birmingham, United Kingdom* 2015.

than those who don't attend hagwons in public schools; therefore, they are highly motivated and dedicated. Some teachers also like that a Hagwon gives them a chance to work in a smaller class setting where they can give more individual attention to the students.

One important fact to note with ESL teaching in Korean Hagwons is that the duration of stay for teachings varied dramatically. According to a survey in 2015, 60% of the expat teachers that worked in hagwons planned to leave that hagwon after 2 years. While 22.2% of the teachers surveyed had mentioned that they planned to stay in South Korea for 5 years or more, the remaining 10% were unsure about their duration of stay. This shows that majority of expat teachers working for private hagwons do not plan to pursue this as a long-term career.²².

Overall, we can see that expats faced a lot of challenges with working in the private hagwon industry. Some of the common struggles included dealing with a management system which was based on business, working under high pressure, having to work overtime and dealing with a lot of unpredictability and unexpected situations in their work environment. These circumstances give expat teachers a difficult perception of the job stability with working at a hagwon.

²² Alpaugh, Michael Craig. "Native English speaking teachers at Hagwons in South Korea: an investigation into their expectations, motivations, beliefs, and realities". *University of Birmingham, United Kingdom* 2015.

Chapter 5: Hidden Racism and Xenophobia

Throughout my research and observations, I have noticed that racism is a factor that affects expat levels of satisfaction. The type of racism that some expats experience in Taiwan and South Korea is not direct racism or hate crimes, but rather how they are perceived by locals in the Taiwanese and South Korean society. In Taiwan and South Korea, racism is a hidden and subtle issue that has been recognized as a social issue. The most well-known form of racial discrimination is to foreign labor workers who come from Southeast Asian countries, who often work in tough conditions with relatively low wages. Racism is also expressed towards Africans and South Asians as well, especially since they often need to deal with stricter immigration policies. In the Han-Chinese society, the idea of race was apparent as early as the Song Dynasty. During this period, labor workers were referred to as 'black-headed people', this term was used to show the hierarchy between the peasant class and the landlord class²³.

In the East Asian countries of Taiwan and South Korea, discrimination also occurs from the nature of the homogeneity of the society. However, in this situation it is not only a matter of race but there is also a concept of socio-economic hierarchy which should be considered. In East Asia, your socio-economic status defines your value in society; particularly your educational merit and your occupation. So, in this society, the perceptions of foreigners is also based on the economic and development levels of the country they originate from. Foreigners who come from nations with high economic development are regarded with more respect than those who don't.

²³ Ngo, Tak-Wing, and Hong-zen Wang, eds. *Politics of difference in Taiwan*. Routledge, 2011.

Chapter 6: Data Analysis

In order to determine the relationship between the independent and dependent variables, I needed to use a raw marginals frequency table. Here is an example of a table below, in which I will explain how the computation process works.

1) How friendly do you think the local people are here?

Expats in Taiwan

	1)low	2) medium	3) high	total
1)not friendly				
2) somewhat friendly		6 75%	2 25%	8 100%
3) very friendly		3 13.6%	19 86.3%	22 100%
total		9 30%	21 70%	30 100%

With the table here, the left-hand side of the table represents degree of friendliness; 1 means not friendly and 3 means very friendly. The top part of the table represents overall satisfaction levels as an expat; 1) means a low level of expat satisfaction, 2) means a medium level of expat satisfaction and 3) means a very high level of expat satisfaction. The total number of expats surveyed was 30, so I had to make sure that when I add downwards and across that everything adds up to 30 expats. So for the category of 'somewhat friendly' there were 8 expats out of 30 that said that the Taiwanese people are 'somewhat friendly'; Among these 8 people 6 of them rated their overall satisfaction levels in Taiwan as a 2, while only 2 of them rated their satisfaction levels as a 3. I had to divide each number by the total in order to get the percentage across; when computing across I had to make sure that everything adds up to 100%. 75% of all the expats who said that the Taiwanese people were 'somewhat friendly' also rated their overall satisfaction levels in Taiwan as a 2, while only 25% of the people rated it as a 3. However, there were 22 out of the 30 expats who rated the Taiwanese locals as 'very friendly' which is a high majority. Out of the 22 people in total that said the Taiwanese were 'very friendly' 19 of them also rated their overall expat satisfaction level as a 3 (which is 86.3%); this shows that there is a significant relationship between degree of friendliness and levels of expat satisfaction. The friendlier expats perceive the local people, the higher their levels of overall satisfaction as an expat will be. For each question in the survey, I made a table just like above for both the expats in Korea and Taiwan and then I compared the results. The following pages will show all of the data results and analysis.

1) What is your overall level of language proficiency?

Expats in South Korea

	1)low	2)medium	3)high	total
1)beginner	1 0.8%	4 33.3%	7 58.3%	12 100%
2)intermediate		10 66.6%	5 33.3%	15 100%
3) advanced		3 100%		3 100%
Total	1 3.3%	17 56.6%	12 40%	30 100%

From this data, we can see that most Expats are at a beginner and intermediate level of Korean language proficiency; 15 out of 30 expats said that they were at an intermediate level, 12 said that they were beginners and only 3 were at an advanced level. For the expats who were at a beginner level, the majority claimed to be highly satisfied living in South Korea and 100% of all those who were advanced said that their overall satisfaction level was at a medium level. This shows that there is no correlation between language proficiency and overall levels of satisfaction for expats of South Korea.

Expats in Taiwan

	1)low	medium	high	total
1)beginner		3 25%	9 75%	12 100%
2)intermediate		5 31.2%	11 68.7%	16 100%
3)advanced		1 50%	1 50%	2 100%
		9 30%	21 70%	30 100%

We can also see in Taiwan that most the expats are at a beginner and intermediate level of Chinese proficiency. However, of all the expats who were at a beginner level 75% of them showed the highest level of overall satisfaction living in Taiwan; 50% of those were advanced mentioned that their satisfaction levels were both rated as a 2 and a 3. This also shows that there is no correlation between Chinese proficiency levels and overall expat satisfaction levels.

2) What is your relationship status?

Expats in South Korea

	1)low	2)medium	3)high	total
1)single	1 5.5%	8 44.4%	10 55.5%	18 100%
2) in a relationship		7 63.6%	4 36.3%	11 100%
3) married		1 100%		1 100%
total	1 3.3%	15 50%	14 46.4%	30 100%

From this data, we can see that the majority of expats of South Korea were either single or in a relationship, and very few were married. For the expats who were single, 55.5% of them surveyed that they were highly satisfied in South Korea, while those who were in a relationship or married ranked their overall level of expat satisfaction as only a 2. This data shows that there is no correlation between relationship status and overall expat satisfaction levels for the expats of South Korea.

Expats in Taiwan

	1)low	2)medium	3)high	total
1)single		7 58.3%	5 41.6%	12 100%
2) in a relationship		2 14.2%	12 85.7%	14 100%
3) married			4 100%	4 100%
total		9 30%	21 70%	30 100%

For the expats of Taiwan, the majority of them surveyed that they were in a relationship which is 14 out of 30 people. Of all the expats who surveyed that they were in a relationship 85.7% of them rated that they were highly satisfied living in Taiwan as well as 100% of the married ones. For the single expats, the overall majority of 58.3% ranked their satisfaction levels at a medium level. In contrast to South Korea, this data shows that the majority of expats in Taiwan who are in a relationship or married have higher levels of overall expat satisfaction.

3)How would you describe your overall financial situations here?

Expats in South Korea

	1)low	2) medium	3) high	
1)not good	1 16.6%	3 50%	2 33.3%	6 100%
2) good enough		11 66.1%	7 38.8%	18 100%
3) Wonderful		2 33.3%	4 66.6%	6 100%
	1 3.3%	16 53.3%	13 43.3%	30 100%

The overall majority of Expats in South Korea surveyed that their overall financial situations as a 2, which means good enough to survive. 66.1% of all the expats who ranked their financial status as a 2 also rated their overall level of expat satisfaction as a 2, while 50 % of those who ranked their financial status as not good also rated their expat satisfaction level as a 2. However, the majority of those who rated their financial status as a 3, which means wonderful, rated their overall level of expat satisfaction level as a 3 which is very high. This shows that the expats who are very financially well off, have higher levels of overall expat satisfaction in South Korea.

Expats in Taiwan

	1)low	2) medium	3) high	
1)not good		2 40%	3 60%	5 100%
2) good enough		7 35%	13 65%	20 100%
3) Wonderful			5 100%	5 100%
		9 30%	21 70%	30 100%

This data shows also shows that the majority of expats in Taiwan rated their financial status as a 2, which means good enough. However, even for those who rated it as a 1 the majority of 60% surveyed that they were highly satisfied living in Taiwan. This shows that there is no correlation between financial status and expat satisfaction levels for expats in Taiwan.

4) How satisfied are you with your housing and living arrangements here?

Expats in South Korea

	1)low	2) medium	3) high	total
1)not satisfied	1 20%	4 80%		5 100%
2) somewhat satisfied		8 53.3%	7 46%	15 100%
3) highly satisfied		5 50%	5 50%	10 100%
	1 3.3%	17 56.6%	12 40%	30 100%

In South Korea, the majority of expats surveyed that they were somewhat satisfied with their housing conditions. 53.3 % of those who rated their housing conditions as a 2, also rated their satisfaction levels as a 2 while the remaining 46% rated their expat satisfaction levels at a 3. There was an equal 50% distribution among those who were highly satisfied with their housing and who ranked their expat satisfaction levels as a 2 and a 3. This shows that there is a small correlation between quality of housing and expat satisfaction levels for expats in South Korea.

Expats in Taiwan

	1)low	2) medium	3) high	total
1)not satisfied		2 100%		2 100%
2) somewhat satisfied		7 38.8%	11 61.1%	18 100%
3) highly satisfied			10 100%	10 100%
		9 30%	21 70%	30 100%

From this data, we can also see that the majority (18 out of 30) of expats rated that they were somewhat satisfied with their housing. Out of all the expats who rated their housing situations as a 2 the majority also rated their satisfaction in Taiwan as highly satisfied; 100% of all the expats who rated their housing quality as a 3 also rated their overall satisfaction levels as a 3. This shows that expats who are at least somewhat or highly satisfied with their housing are generally more satisfied with their overall life in Taiwan.

5)How friendly do you think the local people are here?

Expats in South Korea

	1)low	2) medium	3) high	total
1)not friendly	1 33.3%	2 66.6%		5 100%
2) somewhat friendly		13 68.4%	6 31.5%	19 100%
3) very friendly		2 25%	6 75%	8 100%
total	1 0.7%	17 56.6%	12 41.3%	30 100%

In terms of friendliness, the overall majority of South Korean expats rated that as a 2 which means 'somewhat friendly'. Surprisingly, 66.6% of those expats who rated friendliness as a 1 (not friendly) also rated their overall satisfaction levels as a 2. For those who rated friendliness as a 2, their overall satisfaction levels were also a 2. Finally, 75% of the expats who said the locals are very friendly are also highly satisfied living as an expat in South Korea. This shows that expats who rate local South Koreans as very friendly are more likely to be highly satisfied with their lives in South Korea.

Expats in Taiwan

	1)low	2) medium	3) high	total
1)not friendly				
2) somewhat friendly		6 75%	2 25%	8 100%
3) very friendly		3 13.6%	19 86.3%	22 100%
total		9 30%	21 70%	30 100%

From this data, we can see that Taiwan has a very high rating of friendliness among expats; there were no expats who rated the Taiwanese locals as not friendly. However, the majority of those who rated the locals as 'somewhat friendly' also rated their overall satisfaction levels as a 2 and 86.3% of those who rated the Taiwanese locals as very friendly also are highly satisfied living in Taiwan. This confirms that there is a direct correlation between friendliness of the locals and expat satisfaction levels.

6) How socially conservative do you think the society is here?

Expats in South Korea

	1)low	2) medium	3) high	total
1)not conservative		2 40%	3 60%	5 100%
2) somewhat conservative		2 66.6%	1 33.3%	3 100%
3) very conservative	1 4.54	14 63.63%	7 31.81	22 100%
total	1 3.33%	18 60%	11 36.66%	30 100%

For the expats who rated the Korean society as being 'not conservative' the majority of them (60%) were highly satisfied with their lives in South Korea. Those who ranked the society as being 'somewhat conservative', which is a 2, the majority of them also ranked their overall expat satisfaction levels as a 2; so, this is a direct correlation. For those who rated the South Korean society as being 'very conservative', the majority (63.63%) ranked their satisfaction levels at a medium level. This confirms that there is a correlation between level of conservativeness and expat satisfaction among expats in South Korea.

Expats in Taiwan

	1)low	2) medium	3) high	total
1)not conservative		1 20%	4 80%	5 100%
2) somewhat conservative		7 31.8%	15 68.1%	22 100%
3) very conservative		1 33.3%	2 66.6%	3 100%
total		9 30%	21 70%	30 100%

The overall majority of expats surveyed in Taiwan considered Taiwan to be 'somewhat socially conservative'. However, among those who rated Taiwanese society to be 'somewhat conservative' 68.1% of them were also highly satisfied living in Taiwan, as well as 66.6% of those who said it was very conservative. This shows that there is not a significant correlation between how conservative the society is and expat satisfaction levels in Taiwan.

7) How adventurous are you? Do you always like to explore new things?

Expats in South Korea

	1)low	2) medium	3) high	total
1)not adventurous		1 50%	1 50%	2 100%
2) somewhat adventurous		11 57.8%	8 42.1%	19 100%
3) very adventurous	1 11%	5 55.5%	3 33.3%	9 100%
total	1 3.3%	17 60%	12 36.6%	30 100%

Most expats surveyed here mentioned that they were 'somewhat adventurous' while the remaining mentioned that they were very adventurous and only 2 people mentioned that they were not adventurous. Among all of those who rated how adventurous they were as a 2 (somewhat adventurous) they majority of them also rated that their satisfaction level of living in Taiwan was at a medium level. The majority 55.5% of those who were very adventurous also rated their expat satisfaction levels as a 2 while the remaining 33.3% rated it as high. Overall, this data shows that there is no relevant correlation between how adventurous expats are their overall satisfaction level living in South Korea; which I find to be surprising.

Expats in Taiwan

	1)low	2) medium	3) high	total
1)not adventurous		1 50%	1 50%	2 100%
2) sometimes adventurous		6 28.5%	15 71.4%	21 100%
3) very adventurous		2 28.5%	5 71.4%	7 100%
total		9 30%	21 70%	30 100%

In the case of Taiwan, the majority (20 out of 30) of expats also rated that they are 'somewhat adventurous'. For all of those who rated that they were somewhat adventurous, 71.4% of them rated their overall expat satisfaction in Taiwan as very high, as well as 71.4% of those who were 'very adventurous'. There were only 2 people who mentioned that they were not adventurous and they both ranked their level of expat satisfaction as a 2 and a 3. This data shows that there is not a strong correlation between these two variables.

8) How easy is it to become close friends with the locals here?

Expats in South Korea

	1)low	2) medium	3) high	total
1)not easy		5 62.5%	3 57.5%	8 100%
2) somewhat easy		10 71.4%	4 28.5%	14 100%
3) very easy	1 12.5%	2 25%	5 62.5%	8 100%
total	1 3%	17 56.6%	12 40%%	30 100%

The majority of expats surveyed mentioned that becoming close friends with local south Koreans is “not easy, but not too hard”, while the remaining said it was very hard and only a few said it was very easy. Out of all the Expats who rated that makes friends with the locals was very easy the majority 62.5% of them were highly satisfied living in South Korea; while those who said that it was somewhat easy had a majority expat satisfaction level of a 2. This shows that expats who think that making friends with the locals is ‘very easy’ are more likely to have higher levels of overall satisfaction as an expat in South Korea.

Expats in Taiwan

	1)low	2) medium	3) high	total
1)not easy		3 37.5%	5 62.5%	8 100%
2) somewhat easy		5 35.7%	9 64.2%	14 100%
3) very easy		1 12.5%	7 87.5%	8 100%
total		9 30%	21 70%%	30 100%

In Taiwan, the majority of expats also surveyed that making friends with the locals is ‘not easy, but not too hard’. However, regardless of whether the expats ranked how easy it is to make local friends as a not easy or very easy, the majority in all categories showed high levels of overall expat satisfaction. This shows that how easy it is to make local friends is not a significant determinant of expat satisfaction in Taiwan.

9) How easy is it to become close friends with other foreigners here?

Expats in South Korea

	1)low	2) medium	3) high	total
1)not easy		2 66.6%	1 33%	3 100%
2) somewhat easy		5 55.5%	4 44.4%	9 100%
3) very easy	1 5.5%	10 55.5%	7 38.8%	18 100%
total	1 3%	17 56.6%	12 40%	30 100%

The majority of expats surveyed in this category mentioned that making friends with other expats is 'very easy'. However, regardless of whether the expats rated this category as not easy or very easy all of the expats satisfaction levels showed a medium level of satisfaction as a whole. This shows that there is no correlation between how easy is to make friends with other foreigners and how satisfied expats are living in South Korea.

Expats in Taiwan

	1)low	2) medium	3) high	total
1)not easy			2 100%	2 100%
2) somewhat easy		2 22.2%	7 77.7%	9 100%
3) very easy		6 31.5%	13 68.4%	19 100%
total		8 26.6%	22 73.3%	30 100%

The majority of expats (19 out of 30) in Taiwan also surveyed that making friends with other foreign expats is 'very easy'. For those expats who said that making friends with other foreign expats is easy 68.4% of them were highly satisfied with their lives in Taiwan, as well as the majority 77.7% of those who said that making friends with other foreigners is 'somewhat easy'. Even those who rated that making friends with other foreigners is 'not easy', 100% of them also rated that they were highly satisfied living in Taiwan. This shows that making friends with other foreigners does not impact expat satisfaction levels in Taiwan.

10) How would you rate your level of interest in the local culture?

Expats in South Korea

	1)low	2) medium	3) high	total
1)not interested	1 50%	1 50%		2 100%
2) somewhat interested	1	7 63.6%	3 27.2%	11 100%
3) very interested		8 47%	9 52.9%	17 100%
total	2 6.6%	16 53.3%	12 40%	30 100%

For level of interest in the culture, 17 out of 30 expats surveyed that they were 'very interested' in Taiwanese culture while the rest were 'somewhat interested'. We can that those who said that they were 'somewhat interested' in the local culture also had a medium level of overall expat satisfaction; those who were not interested in the local culture either had a low or medium level of overall expat satisfaction. However, the majority of expats who were 'very interested' in the local culture also were highly satisfied (52.9%). This shows that there is a strong correlation between interest in the culture and expat satisfaction levels.

Expats in Taiwan

	1)low	2) medium	3) high	total
1)not interested		1 50%	1 50%	2 100%
2) somewhat interested		5 45.4%	6 54.5%	11 100%
3) very interested		3 17.6%	14 82.3%	17 100%
total		9 30%	21 70%	30 100%

The majority of expats in Taiwan also surveyed that they were 'very interested' in the local culture, while the remaining were 'somewhat interested' and only a few were not interested. Surprisingly for those who were not interested, 1 of the expats was 'somewhat satisfied with their overall life in Taiwan while the other one was 'highly satisfied'. The majority of those who were either 'somewhat interested' or 'very interested' were also highly satisfied with their lives in Taiwan. This shows that there is a significant relationship between interest and the culture and expat satisfaction in Taiwan as well.

11) How satisfied are you with your job or studies here?

Expats in South Korea

	1)low	2) medium	3) high	total
1)not satisfied	1 12.5%	7 87.5%		8 100%
2) somewhat satisfied		10 66.6%	5 33.3%	15 100%
3) very satisfied		1 14.2%	6 85.7%	7 100%
total	1 3.3%	18 60%	11 36.6%	30 100%

The majority of expats surveyed in South Korea mentioned that they were 'somewhat satisfied' with their job or studies. For those who were not satisfied, the majority (87.5%) rated their overall expat satisfaction levels as a 2, as well as those who were somewhat satisfied. However, the majority of expats who were very satisfied with their job or studies were also highly satisfied with their overall life in South Korea (85.7%). This confirms that the more satisfied an expat in South Korea is with their job or studies, the more satisfied they are with their overall lives in South Korea.

Expats in Taiwan

	1)low	2) medium	3) high	total
1)not satisfied		1 50%	1 50%	2 100%
2) somewhat satisfied		7 46.6%	8 53.3%	15 100%
3) very satisfied		1 7.6%	12 92.3%	13 100%
total		9 30%	21 70%	30 100%

The Taiwanese case for expats is slightly different than South Korea's in this category. The majority of expats also did mention that they were 'somewhat satisfied' with their job or studies here; however, even among those who were somewhat satisfied the majority of them were still highly satisfied overall as an expat. Even those who were not satisfied were either somewhat or very happy as an expat in Taiwan. Even though this shows that expats who are highly satisfied with their jobs are more likely to be satisfied as an overall expat, it also shows that even if they are not satisfied with their job or studies they may still be satisfied as an expat in Taiwan.

12) How are lifestyle conditions back in your hometown? Including financial stability, family relations, safety, development, convenience, etc?

Expats in South Korea

	1)low	2) medium	3) high	total
1)not good		2 50%	2 50%	8 100%
2) ok, but not amazing	1 5.4%	9 47.3%	9 47.3%	19 100%
3) wonderful		5 71.4%	2 28.5%	7 100%
total	1 3%	16 53.3%	13 43.4%	30 100%

For all of the expats in South Korea who mentioned that their lifestyle conditions back at home were 'not good' their overall level of expat satisfaction was equally divided between medium and high levels of expat satisfaction. For those who said that life style conditions back at home were 'ok, but no amazing', their overall level of expat satisfaction was divided equally between both medium and high levels (47.3%). For those who said that lifestyle conditions back at home were 'wonderful, the majority of them rated their overall expat satisfaction in South Korea as a 2. This shows that if life conditions back at home are 'ok, but not amazing' then expats will be more likely to have higher satisfaction levels living abroad in South Korea.

Expats in Taiwan

	1)low	2) medium	3) high	total
1)not good			2 100%	2 100%
2) ok, but not amazing		4 23.5%	13 76.4%	17 100%
3) wonderful		5 45.4%	6 54.5%	11 100%
total		9 30%	21 70%	30 100%

From this data, we can see among all the categories of lifestyle conditions back at home, ranging from not good to wonderful, the majority of expats in all categories still ranked their overall expat satisfaction level in Taiwan as a 3. This shows that in the case of Taiwan, lifestyle conditions back at home does not have a strong impact on how satisfied expats are living in Taiwan.

13) What is your expected length of stay here?

Expats in South Korea

	1)low	2) medium	3) high	total
1)leaving soon	1 25%	2 50%	1 25%	4 100%
2) not sure, as long as I can.		10 62.5%	6 37.5%	16 100%
3)staying forever				
4) Already left		5 50%	5 50%	10 100%
total	1 3%	17 56.6%	12 40%	30 100%

For the expats who mentioned that were going to be leaving South Korea soon, 50% of them rated their overall satisfaction level living in South Korea as a 2 while the remaining both rated their expat satisfaction levels as a 1 and a 3. For those who were not sure about how long they will stay in South Korea, the majority of them (62.5%) rated their overall satisfaction levels as a 2. Even for those who had already left, there was an even 50% divided between those who had medium and high levels of expat satisfaction. These statistics show that there is no correlations between length of stay and overall satisfaction for expats in South Korea.

Expats in Taiwan

	1)low	2) medium	3) high	total
1)leaving soon		7 58.3%	5 41.6%	12 100%
2) not sure, as long as I can.		2 14.2%	12 85.7%	14 100%
3)staying forever			4 100%	4 100%
Total		9 30%	21 70%	30 100%

The statistic for expats in Taiwan are quite different from the expats of South Korea. For Taiwan, it shows that the majority of people who mentioned that they were leaving soon had a medium level of expat satisfaction, while those who were not sure had a very high level of overall expat satisfaction (85.7%); and finally, 100% of the expats who chose to stay in Taiwan permanently were highly satisfied. This confirms that there is a correlation between length of stay and overall satisfaction levels for expats in Taiwan.

Chapter 7: Predicted Factors that impact Expat Satisfaction

2) Length of Stay Abroad

The length of stay has a significant impact on the quality of an expat's experience abroad. Often when an expat arrives in the new country the first question they'll get is "how long are you going to stay here?". In general, I predict that sometimes the shorter the amount of time a person is staying abroad the more likely they are to enjoy their experience; of course, this is not true for all expats, especially those who have decided to settle down and live abroad permanently. The reason for this is that when a person knows they are going to be abroad for just a short period, they automatically feel like they need to make full use of their time and try to enjoy it. Often because they know that they will only be here for a short time, they tend to be less bothered by culture shock and adapting because they know they will return home soon. Exchange students studying abroad at universities are usually the perfect example of this, they try to enjoy themselves as quickly as possible. This is one of the reasons why most tourist that travel abroad are usually fully content and enjoy themselves because they want to make the most out of their short time on vacation; they don't have to worry about fully adapting to a foreign society. However, a person who is staying for a longer period such as 2 years or even permanently will spend more time in their lives adapting to the new culture. For example, if a person has come to do their undergraduate degree for 4 years and they start experiencing serious culture shock they can't easily psychologically say "Oh it's ok, I'll be going back home in a couple of months"; they need to be strong and endure everything for the full 4 years knowing that they need to get their college degree. We

will see an example of this situation later in the paper among some of the expats that I interviewed.

3) Work or School Conditions

Most of the time when expats come to live abroad in South Korea or Taiwan they usually either come to work or to study. I think that the quality of a person's work and school life is the one of the most important factors that influences one's experience living abroad. If a person is not satisfied with their job or studies and is feeling a lot of high stress then they may be less like to want to stay in that country that they are living; of course, in some exceptional cases workers may simply change jobs, but this is not as easy since it involves a lot of paper work the visa process. If a foreign student who is studying abroad experiences high amounts of stress from their Academic studies, this may inhibit them from fully enjoying their experience living abroad. They may feel that because of intense academic pressure they didn't have as much time to fully enjoy and maximize their time abroad. However, if the student is feeling great about their academic studies and is not under stress they will feel that they have a lot of time to travel and participate in fun activities. Expats that work abroad are even more affected by their jobs than students because they usually work full time and spend most their time at work. So, expats that are happy with their job or studies are most likely to be satisfied living abroad.

4) Relationship Status

Through my observations and research, I have discovered that relationship status is one of the most important factors that affect the quality of an expat's life abroad. In many cases, a relationship is one of the direct reasons why an expat comes abroad. Some people will choose to enroll in a degree program abroad just because their wife or husband is also in a degree program. In general, expats who have a serious relationship or marriage tend to be even more content living abroad. Couples have the advantage that they can learn to adapt to a new society with each other's support even if none of them are locals.

Some of the expats that I interviewed have directly told me that if they weren't in the successful relationship that they are in now they would be back at home. The most difficult circumstance for expats that are single is that if they feel homesick or endure culture shock they must be strong by themselves; they can't rely on a partner to keep them comfortable living abroad. An expat who is in a relationship with a local Taiwanese or Korean person has a very strong advantage, especially if they are married. Usually when expats come abroad by themselves they must figure things out and deal with language barriers on their own, but if they are in a relationship with a native then they will get extra help adapting. Even having local friends is not always enough to adapt comfortably in a foreign society where you don't speak the language. One of the reasons for this is that local South Koreans and Taiwanese often have busy schedules, so they can't always be available to help you when you need it. When an expat is married to a local in a foreign country, this gives them a much deeper connection to the culture

which basically turns into family. So, if an expat is married to a local native of a country they are residing in, that culture is not just an alien culture it becomes part of them. However, a person who is not in a relationship with a local will always feel that the culture is totally foreign to them; even if they are totally enjoying themselves living abroad. However, this doesn't mean that an expat has to be in a relationship to be happy living abroad. In fact, I have discovered that a person's level of confidence with finding a relationship abroad influences their mentality. For example, if an expat feels confident that he can easily find dates while living abroad then relationship status isn't really a concern for them.

5) Current Financial and Living Situations

The financial situations of an expat is probably has the biggest influence in their experience living abroad. My prediction is that expats with better financial situations will be more content because they can invest in a higher quality of experiences while living abroad. Often this includes investing in a high-quality apartment or living situation, participating in more activities, traveling frequently and being able to eat better qualities of food. If one is financially limited they may feel that they are unable to maximize their time abroad.

6) Level of Language Proficiency

Acquiring language proficiency in a foreign language is something that all expats have to go through, unless their home country speaks the same language. Every expat in Taiwan and South Korea, especially must deal with language barriers and somehow finding a

way to communicate with people. For many people, they can still be content if they are not able to speak the local language; especially since English is a lingua-franca of the world. Many expats that live in major cities such as Taipei and Seoul are especially able to get by with only speaking a little bit of the language and using English when they can. However, for some expats, not being able to speak the local language can make life very frustrating. They may feel excluded or even frustrated because they can't express themselves to people or communicate effectively. Most expats do try to learn the language, take language classes and even participate in language exchange groups. One thing that is important to note is that the Chinese and Korean language are among the most difficult languages in the world to master, these languages are not easy. It is very difficult for an expat to gain a native level proficiency in these languages, they must spend several years studying hard to gain mastery. However, if an expat has an advance level of proficiency in the language or is even a native speaker then it allows them to feel much more comfortable. Expats with good language proficiency often even get compliments from locals which helps to boost their confidence and encourage them to keep studying.

7) Level of interest in the culture

It is important to have a decent level of interest in the culture to live comfortably as an expat. I can confidently say that the more interest an expat has in the culture the better. In addition to studying the language it is also important to learn other aspects of the culture such as the history, traditions, beliefs, art and much more. Some expats have even studying the language and culture back in their home country before they came to

live abroad. Students who study abroad, especially exchange students, usually have strong interest in the culture and the region they chose to study in. Without having an interest in the culture, it is very difficult to connect well with locals; you will always feel distant and homesick.

8) Living situations back in home country

The quality of lifestyle back in an expat's home country has a significant impact on the decisions that they make for living abroad. Usually when an expat decides to live abroad permanently it's usually because they felt some sort of instability back at home or they felt that they could gain something better from staying abroad as opposed to back at home. Things such as poor economic situations, unemployment, high living expenses, safety concerns, poverty, government corruption, and lack of socio-economic advancement opportunities can motivate an expat to move abroad permanently; we will see some examples of this in our interview analysis later. However, if an expat feels that living conditions back at home are great then they are more likely to return home eventually.

9) Quality of personal connections with locals and other Expats

This is a crucial factor that is often overlooked. As an expat in a society that you are unfamiliar with not only is it important to have good connections with locals but it is also important to have good connections with other expats as well. It is a very common scenario for expats to have closer affiliations with other expats than locals because they have more that they can share, especially with adjusting to a foreign country. The worst

scenario is when an expat has neither good personal connections with locals or other expats; this can lead to a feeling of being excluded and isolated.

10) How out-going and adventurous you are?

Throughout my research and observations, I have noticed that the expats that are very adventurous tend to be the happiest living abroad. Many of these expats participate in activities such as biking, hiking, sight-seeing, rock-climbing, exercising, community events, etc. This doesn't necessarily mean that people that don't like outdoor activities are unhappy, but it's about how curious they are to constantly explore. Usually what happens when expats are not content where they are is that they lose interest in exploring the country and they often feel that there is nothing new that is significant for them to see. But many expats that are happy living abroad will admit that they are very adventurous and like to explore, they often find exploring the new culture to be exciting; in their case, adapting to different cultural norms and values is exciting and interesting.

Chapter 8 Conclusion

From the surveys and statistical information conducted in this analysis, I was able to get a lot of useful information to test whether my hypothesis as well as the literature were applicable to modern day expats in Taiwan and South Korea. In terms of overall satisfaction levels as an expat, Taiwan did rank the highest from my survey data. Out of 30 expats in Taiwan 71% of them rated their overall experience in Taiwan as a 3 (which means amazing), while 25.8% of the expats rated their experience as a 2 which is 'good, but not necessarily amazing', and only 1 person (3%) mentioned that their experience was not good. However, in South Korea 17 out of 30 expats (which is 57%), rated their overall satisfaction living in Korea as a 2 which means 'good, but not necessarily amazing'. The remaining 40% rated that their overall experience was amazing and only 1 person (3%) mentioned that their overall experience was not good. Out of all of the independent variables tested, the two that had the strongest impact on expat satisfaction levels were 'level of friendliness' and 'level of interest in the culture'. Taiwan also scored the highest in the category of friendliness; 75% of all the expats surveyed rated friendliness as a 3 (very friendly) while the remaining 25% surveyed 'somewhat friendly' and there was no person who rated 'not friendly'. However, at the same time the majority of expats (68.75%) also said that the Taiwanese society was 'somewhat socially conservative'; so based on these statistics, the appropriate way to describe friendliness in Taiwan is "friendly but somewhat socially conservative". In South Korea, the majority (60%) of expats rated that South Koreans were 'somewhat friendly' and the remaining 30% rated a 3 (very friendly) and only 3% rated 'not friendly'. When it comes to friendliness, there are a couple of rationales that could justify the reason why Taiwan ranked higher in terms of the overall friendliness category of the

local people. The primary reason for this is because of the historical and cultural differences. Throughout South Korea's history everything that is affiliated with notion of "foreign" is not regarded in a positive way, with the exception of the USA support during the Korean War; as a result of this South Koreans had to use nationalism as a way to protect their identity throughout history. In the South Korean society there is more xenophobia and stronger distinction between being "Korean" and a "foreigner" than in Taiwan. Another reason for differences in friendliness is also the differences of lifestyle and population. Seoul has a very dense population which is much larger than that of Taipei. Anytime there is a city that is densely populated the lifestyle is going to be a lot more intense, competitive, fast-paced and people are not going to appear to be as friendly; which is the case in Seoul. South Korea also has a very high suicide rate, the second highest suicide rate in the world according to the world health organization (WHO); this implies that the lifestyle pressure of local South Koreans is higher than the Taiwanese²⁴. The data shows that the higher the level of friendliness and interest in local culture, the higher the level of overall expat satisfaction. Another interesting observation is that from the data, it has been shown that there is no correlation between language proficiency and expat satisfaction levels. The surveys showed that most expats level of Korean or Chinese proficiency is either at a beginner or intermediate level. However, despite their level the majority of expats still rated their level of overall satisfaction as a 3 (high satisfaction). Based on my experience of living as an expat in Taiwan and South Korea I strongly agree with the results of these statistics that language proficiency does not have a major influence on expat satisfaction. The reason for this is because language ability is just a tool that

²⁴ Yoon, Minsik. *South Korea Still Has Top OECD Suicide Rate*. The Korea Herald, 30 Aug. 2017.

can enhance your experience if you have it but it is not the primary factor of expat experience. Since English is the most commonly studied language among locals in Taiwan and South Korea many expats are able to get still adapt well even with English alone. Expats can still participate in many activities and bond closely with local people even if they can only speak English; especially in the capital cities of Seoul and Taipei there are always English services available somewhere to assist foreign expats if they need help. Also the way in which an expat is perceived and treated by locals of Taiwan and South Korea is not always influenced by their language ability even though it will be greatly appreciated. The way you an expat is treated and perceived by locals is more influenced by factors such as nationality, socio-economic status, educational status, personality and sometimes even race; language proficiency is just an enhancement tool that can make expat life easier. So in contrast to my prediction and claims from literature, I now feel confident to claim that language proficiency levels do not have an impact on how satisfied an expat is living in Taiwan or South Korea. Some of the similarities between expats in South Korea and in Taiwan is that, for the question of 'how easy is it to make friends with other foreign expats', even though the majority both said that it was very easy the data showed that there is no correlation between this variable and overall expat satisfaction level. In terms of duration of stay, for the expats of Korea the data showed that there was no correlation between duration of stay and expat satisfaction levels, but for expats in Taiwan it showed that the expats who stayed longer tended to be more highly satisfied as an expat in Taiwan. For the question of 'how adventurous are you', even though I predicted that the more adventurous and expat is the higher their overall level of satisfaction will be the data showed that there was no correlation between these two variables. The majority of expats in Taiwan

and South Korea both rated that making friends with the locals is “not easy, but not hard”. So from this data analysis we can see the differences and similarities of overall expat satisfaction levels in both Taiwan and South Korea.



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