



Cross-cultural Challenges and Creativity

A picture of Latin American self-initiated expatriates in Germany

Master Thesis

Svenja Croon

s1123270

s.croon@student.utwente.nl

MSc in Business Administration / Innovation Management & Entrepreneurship

Supervision

Dr. M. L. Ehrenhard

Dr. J. Rank

Dr. R. Harms

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Abstract

Expatriation has become an increasingly important research field in accordance with growing globalization. At the same time, organizations can benefit from culturally diverse employees in order to gain competitive advantage from new inputs and mindsets. Diversity is especially crucial for creative and innovative businesses as idea generations are their key activity. It is however necessary to learn how to motivate expatriates to be creative. Whereas company-backed expatriates mostly receive special training prior to their stay in the host country, self-initiated ones, who are moving individually, often arrive with little knowledge about the new culture which entails several challenges to overcome. This study analyses the perceptions of self-initiated expatriates from Latin America who live and work in creative fields in Germany. It explores the cultural differences between the two regions that are experienced by them and the resulting advantages and challenges. Furthermore, effects from these aspects on the level of creativity and innovativeness are examined. Interviews were conducted with twenty Latin American expatriates. Findings show that the social interaction culture in Germany rather impedes creativity, mediated by the factor of adjustment. The German firm culture on the other hand was found to have positive influences on creativity. This study is part of a bigger research project that aims at exploring the perceptions about cultural differences between the host country and Germany and the relationship to creativity regarding self-initiated expatriates from different parts of the world.

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1. Introduction

Growing globalization has enabled people to move more and more freely across national borders, not only for vacations but also to start a new life in a foreign place. Accordingly, the number of global migrants has been growing rapidly over the last years and decades and is expected to increase even further in the future (IOM, 2010). The motives behind migration are various. Some people move for personal reasons such as the affection to a specific place, the pursuing of social relationships or simply the love for traveling and adventure. Others see the economic opportunities in a foreign market. (Howe-Wals & Schyns, 2010) Aside from the refugee movements, most expatriation decisions are based on the wish for a better professional future (ILO, 2015), either in terms of more lucrative conditions or a better suited position (Howe-Wals & Schyns, 2010). This is especially attracting people who originate from developing countries. While the average income in Germany for instance is three times as high as in countries like Brazil or Colombia, the expatriation to a financially richer country can benefit whole families (International Monetary Fund, 2014). It is thus no surprise that Europe is, followed by Anglo-Saxon regions, the leading destination for expatriates due to economic prosperity (Statista, 2015a). Asia, Africa and Latin America on the other hand face high emigration rates, mainly caused by financial dissatisfaction (Boelt & Prud'homme, 2013).

Expatriates can be differentiated into two groups. On the one hand, there are *company-backed expatriates* that are sent abroad from their home company to fulfill an international assignment. On the other hand, *self-initiated expatriates* are people who decide to work in a foreign country with no organizational support. While the first group mostly gains organizational training prior to their arrival and stay for a fixed time period, the latter usually have to organize themselves and are thus not limited in the duration or location of their residence. Self-initiated expatriates therefore tend to have a higher motivation to enter a specific host country based on its status. While company-backed expatriates mainly see the benefits of career opportunities, the main driver for self-initiated expatriation is the desire for adventure (Doherty, Dickmann & Mills, 2011).

Immigration is however not always an easy step for both expatriate groups. After the first euphoria of discovering a foreign country diminishes, many people experience a time of crisis, where culture shock takes place. It requires a strong will and power of endurance to recover from the shock and finally reach cultural adjustment (Gullahorn & Gullahorn, 1963). Culture is therefore

a crucial aspect in expatriation research and can entail several challenges for the immigrant (Hofstede, 1980). *Culture* is defined as “shared understandings made manifest in act and artifact” (Redfield, 1948, p. 7). They are displayed by the practices and values of a society. A *practice* shows ‘as things are’ while *values* indicate ‘as things should be’ (Brewer, & Venaik, 2010). Expatriates who are employed in the host country do not only face the national culture, but are additionally challenged with an organizational culture that is found to differ a lot between regions due to their influences from local values and practices (Hofstede, 1980). *Organizational culture* is defined as “the way in which members of an organization relate to each other, their work and the outside world in comparison to other organizations” (The Hofstede Center, 2015). New team structures and leadership styles can become highly frustrating for foreign workers, which often leads to a low level of adjustment (Black, Mendenhall & Oddou, 1991; Black, 1988). *Adjustment* is measured in psychological comfort and familiarity with a new environment (Black, 1988). Culture shock at the workplace, which Oberg described as an “occupational disease” (Oberg, 1960, p. 185) is often the reason for expatriates’ failure.

While cultural differences can impede expatriation, they also offer many opportunities for employing organizations. Companies can use foreign expertise for internationalization strategies in order to gain specific knowledge about the target markets but also to use a more diverse scope of mindsets for daily work assignments (Niebuhr, 2010). This is especially crucial for creative and innovative fields. *Creativity* and *innovation* are defined as “the process, outcomes, and products of attempts to develop and introduce new and improved ways of doing things” (Anderson, Potocnik & Zhou, 2014, p. 4). They are considered crucial not only for a firm’s performance but also for its survival (Anderson, Potocnik & Zhou, 2014). *Creativity* describes the process of idea generation, whereas *innovation* refers to the implementation phase (Rank, Pace, & Frese, 2004). A higher variance in knowledge and capabilities that is prevailing in culturally diverse teams enhances these processes and are thus profitable for overall firm performance (Niebuhr, 2010). Consequently, cultural diversity can benefit organizational output and strengthen the competitive advantage (Cox & Blake, 1991). On the other hand, diversity management requires specialized human resource skills. Only when managers identify the challenges and opportunities of cultural aspects, they will be able to take advantage from diversity (Cox & Blake, 1991). It is therefore crucial to analyze cross-cultural differences and how they affect employees and their performance.

Thus, this thesis paper investigates what cultural challenges arise for expatriates and how they affect their level of creativity or innovativeness. Focus will be placed on creative and innovative firms where diversity has an increased value. Germany presenting the most popular European destination country and ranked on third place worldwide (demografie-portal, 2011) and its domestic businesses are focus of the research. By looking at cultural comparison literature, it is striking that especially Latin American countries differ a lot from the German values (Hofstede, 1980; House et al., 2004), which makes it especially important to be studied. It is therefore chosen as the particular expatriation region of interest.

2. Research Questions

In order to understand which cultural challenges come up for self-initiated Latin-American expatriates working in Germany and how these cultural aspects affect their work experiences as well as their creative performance, the overarching research question of this study is the following:

Which cross-cultural challenges affect creative Latin American expatriates in Germany?

This topic will further be split into three sub-questions to have a clear guidance through the research process:

First of all, it is necessary to detect what cultural differences exist for the expatriates. The first question is therefore the following:

SQ1. What are, from the perspective of self-initiated expatriates, the most important cultural differences between Latin America and Germany?

Further, the study aims to explore in which ways the two cultures may clash and which positive and negative effects are experienced from cultural differences by means of the second question:

SQ2. Which cross-cultural advantages and challenges do Latin American self-initiated expatriates experience in Germany?

Last but not least, these advantages and challenges are investigated in regard to their effects on the creative performance of expatriates. Thus, the resulting third question is as follows:

SQ3. From the experience of self-initiated Latin American expatriates, how do these issues affect their level of creativity?

3. Relevance

3.1 Practical Relevance

The consideration of cross-national challenges becomes more and more important as globalization is growing and trans-national migration is on the rise. While in 1990, only 154 million of all people worldwide were living abroad, the United Nations found that with an amount of recently 232 million, the number of global migrants is on its highest level to date (Boelt & Prud'homme, 2013). Compared to the total population, this indicates a migration growth of 15%.

The reasons for moving are diverse. Most people however leave their home country to seek employment and economic stability (ILO, 2014a). Through its reputation of high wealth and preferable social structures, Europe is the top destination region with an immigration population of 72 million citizens, corresponding to 22% of all migrants globally (Boelt & Prud'homme, 2013).

The leading European destination country is Germany, ranked on third place worldwide after the US and Russia, which is far ahead of the European average and thus of special interest (MPI, 2013). This worker inflow does not only result from a high popularity of the German culture but is clearly intended by the government in response to the demographic challenges the country faces. While the German population becomes increasingly older, young people are missing to complete the pension system (demografie-portal, 2011). Scientists calculated that Germany needs 500.000 immigrants each year in order to maintain its social structures, many of them are demanded in high-tech firms where creative thinking and innovative solution finding is crucial (Welt, 2015). This offers new opportunities to young skilled people all over the world, especially those who are challenged to find employment in the home country due to poor job markets. Several Latin American countries face high emigration rates (ILO, 2014b). While the US is still the main target for many South and Central Americans, European countries such as Germany gain growing popularity as their destination. From the beginning of the new millennium, many Latin American countries such as Mexico, Brazil and Colombia have approximately doubled their migration rates to Germany (OECD, 2015).

Yet, even though immigration is desired, there is often the inability to successfully deal with cross-cultural issues. Many German firms are not prepared to integrate foreign workers properly

(Angulo, 2013). While company-backed expatriation is mostly better managed, only few firms actively engage in the HRM of self-initiated expatriates (Howe-Wals & Schyns, 2010). Researchers argue that between 25% and 40% of all expatriates return home early (Buckley & Brooke, 1992). Additionally, expatriates who are unhappy with their work situation but refuse to go back tend to be negatively affected in their work performance and can thus cause damages on the overall organizational outcome (Harzing, 1995). It is therefore crucial to explore cross-cultural challenges in order to avoid failures for expatriates as well as for companies.

3.2 Scientific Relevance

As globalization and international organizations represent increasingly significant fields of interest, rising attention has been put on research about the management of cross-cultural challenges of expatriates. Numerous literature deals with different cultures and their influences on organizational structures. Hofstede (1960) analyzes the national cultures of more than hundred countries, including most of the Latin American listed nations. Although his study is very popular in cross-cultural research, the model is not without critiques. Several authors argue that his dimensions and scores rather apply to ecological conditions and less to the individual level (Brewer & Venaik, 2012; Venaik & Brewer, 2013). Moreover, the research only considers the values. Accordingly, it shows how a culture “should be” but does not investigate their actual practices and thus misses the “as is” analysis (Shi & Wang, 2011).

House et al.'s book “Culture, leadership, and organizations: The GLOBE study of 62 societies” (2004) also analyzes different cultures and puts them in comparison. This study deals with both, the values as well as practices of a society, measured by surveys conducted in approximately 150 countries (Shi & Wang, 2011). Furthermore, the authors segment the investigated countries into clusters, resulting in ten regions, which better displays the contrasts between the German and the Latin American culture (House et al., 2004).

By providing long-term studies on cultural differences between societies, Hofstede (1980) and House et al. (2004) have become popular literature for cultural research. However, what both studies miss is the analysis of challenges and consequences that appear for people moving between two cultures, hence the cross-cultural aspect. Moreover, neither Hofstede nor House explicitly deal with creativity and innovation. As these professional fields however become more

and more crucial in today's society where novelty is the key to success, it is important to detect synergies between cultural differences and creativity.

Hofstede's studies only contain data from employees of IBM. While IBM represents a large company that has been found a century ago and is thus expected to have established certain structures, these data may not be comparable to start-ups and other SME's which play an increasingly important role in innovative and creative industries. The study of House et al. (2004) concentrates on the three industries finances, food processing and telecommunications of which only the latter is mainly concerned with innovative ideas. Furthermore, their sample consists of middle or higher managers only and is therefore seen from an exclusive point of view (House et al., 2004).

Whereas several studies investigate expatriation, adjustment and work performance (Doherty & Dickmann, 2008; Howe-Wals & Schyns, 2010; Black, 1988; Bhatti et al., 2013; Amabile, 1996), little research focuses on creative and innovative expatriates and businesses, which is exemplified later in the Theoretical Framework. Yet, creative firms often differ strongly in their climate and structures from conventional organizations (Martins & Terblanche, 2003) and so do creative-thinking professionals (Barron & Harrington, 1981). It is thus supposed that adjustment and performance of those may vary heavily compared to the average results. As creativity and innovation gain importance, it is therefore crucial to detect synergies especially for employees in those business fields.

Furthermore, the main research field of expatriation concentrates on adjustment and failure levels of employees from Western countries who expatriate to less-developed regions and also on company-backed employees rather than self-initiated migrants (Buckley & Brooke, 1992, Mendenhall & Oddou, 1985). Little is however known about the challenges of expatriating from rather poor to richer economic societies. This thesis aims at filling these research gaps by analyzing the cross-cultural challenges that arise for expatriates moving between different cultures with focus on creative or innovative professionals. In this regard, only employed expatriates are regarded as they enjoy fully integrated into the firm in contrast to freelancers, at least from the legal perspective.

4. Theoretical Framework

Research about international businesses represents an increasingly dynamic study area in accordance with growing globalization (Brewer & Vernaik, 2010). The amount of published articles dealing with expatriation and culture is extremely high. In this chapter, the most relevant papers are discussed. For this purpose, web search engines for scientific literature have been used to determine theories that contribute to this study, such as *Google Scholar* and *Scopus*. Also specific journals have been scanned to find all necessary literature like the *Journal of World Business*, the *Journal of Human Resource Management* and the *Journal of managerial Psychology*. The generated articles were sorted by relevance in terms of citations to prioritize papers that are perceived as relevant by most scientists. Additionally, mainly literature from the past ten to fifteen years were prioritized but older theory was also regarded when their outcomes seemed to be still valid in the present time. By this means, a comprehensive literature overview could be created.

Three themes were investigated to serve as a theoretical structure for the research. As investigating cross-cultural challenges presumes that differentiations between cultures exist, the first theme covers the aspects of culture differentiations. Due to its extension, three sub-themes were identified here. The first sub-theme Models of Culture discusses the different views on cultural aspects. In order to find suitable articles, several key words were entered into the engines and journals such as “culture models”, “culture dimensions” and “culture organization”. The second sub-theme Cultural Clustering aims to display the varying perceptions about the grouping of cultures. Key words for this part were “culture clusters”, “culture levels”, “national culture”, “geographical culture”, etc. Cultural Differences as the third sub-theme is based on the prior two and serves as the key element for the interview research. It detects the cultural differences in terms of the detected dimensions with regard to the cultural clusters, focusing the two investigated regions. Since the study of House et al. (2004) has shown to be the most suitable for this study, its findings are in focus of the paper. The fourth theme of theory represents findings of articles about Expatriation and Adjustment. Motives for expatriation are identified and adjustment phases are defined. This is crucial as these topics are assumed to correlate to differing perceptions of the new culture and the challenges it entails (Bhatti et al., 2013). For this purpose, several key words were used, such as “self-initiated expatriation” “motives expatriation”, “immigration”, “adjustment levels”, “adjustment curve” and “expatriate adjustment”. It was also searched for a direct link to creativity with terms like “creative expatriates”, “expatriation innovation” and “immigrants in

creative industries” but as stated earlier, hardly any papers were found that match the actual topic. Last but not least, theories about the correlation between “cultural diversity and creativity” are discussed in the paragraph Creativity and Diversity. This is done to display the controversial findings about the interplay between those two components and finally compare them to the perceptions of the interviewed sample. Key words for this theme were among others “diversity in firms”, “diverse teams”, “diversity creativity” and “culture mix organizations”.

4.1 Culture

4.1.1 Models of Culture

In order to understand cultures and their differences, several models have been developed in the last decades. The study of Hofstede (1980) represents the most known and applied model of all. He analyses national cultures of around 100 nations and their impact on organizational culture. Data were collected from surveys of IBM employees, where the author used to work himself, during the 60’s and 70’s and have been revalidated from time to time. Six dimensions are identified in order to differentiate between cultures. These are power distance, individualism, masculinity, uncertainty avoidance (1980), and the later added long-term orientation (Bond, 1991) and indulgence (Minkov & Hofstede, 2010). Although the study of Hofstede is very popular in cross-cultural research, his model is not without critiques. Several authors argue that his dimensions and scores rather apply to ecological conditions and less to the individual level (Brewer & Venaik, 2012; Venaik & Brewer, 2013). Furthermore, the research only considers national values, so it shows how a culture “should be” but does not investigate their actual practices and thus misses the “as is” analysis (Shi & Wank, 2011).

In contrast to Hofstede's studies, Trompenaar and Hampden-Turner's (1998) framework of cross-cultural communication see culture less as a static point but a movement between two extremes that are represented by seven dimension. The first five dimensions deal with the relationships among people, which are universalism vs particularism, individualism versus communitarianism, neutral versus emotional, specific versus diffuse and achievement versus ascription. Two additional dimensions are attitude to time (sequential versus synchronization) and attitude to environment (internal versus external control).

A more recent study is the GLOBE project of House et al. (2004). Similar to the previously presented research of national cultures (Hofstede, 1980; Trompenaar & Hampden-Turner, 1998), House et al.'s book "Culture, leadership, and organizations: The GLOBE study of 62 societies" (2004) analyses cultural differences with regard to the business world. In contrast to Hofstede however, next to cultural values, his study further considers actual procedures on the individual level, measured by surveys conducted all over the world (Shi & Wang, 2011).

House et al. (2004) developed nine cultural dimensions. Future Orientation is a widely discussed dimension that can be found in many cultural studies (Hofstede, Kluckhohn & Strodtbeck, 1961). It represents the importance of a long-term perspective which can be shown in the appreciation of planning (House et al., 1999). Hofstede's "taboo dimension" masculinity/femininity is partly reflected by four of the GLOBE's dimensions. Instead of regarding the dimension as a duality however, Gender Egalitarianism measures the degree to which equal treatments are promoted by inspecting job positions of the two sexes and comparing literacy rates for example. Performance Orientation measures the degree to which a society supports and demands high performance and standards. This is connected to aspects such as rewards, training and responsibilities. It is related to Hofstede's masculinity, as well as the dimension Assertiveness, which shows to what extent people act aggressive and tough. Humane Orientation is associated with friendship, love and sympathy, high importance on family and on human rights. This is also reflected by Hofstede's femininity. Hofstede's (1980) collectivism reflects the strength of ties between individuals, the degree of sociability and focus on groups. House et al. (2004) differentiate further between Institutional Collectivism and In-Group Collectivism. Power Distance, which is also part of Hofstede's model, reflects the degree of hierarchies by aspects like authority, status privileges and societal classes. Uncertainty Avoidance measures the extent to which uncertain situations are prevented, including the number of rules and the degree of bureaucracy (House et al., 2004)

4.1.2 Cultural Clustering

Cultures can be measured on different levels. The most common use of culture is in regard to countries (Hofstede, 1980; Kogut & Singh, 1988; Doney, Cannon, & Mullen, 1998). Beyond the national cultures, additional cultural clusters of countries are detected. These clusters can be measured by different commonalities such as ethnic social capital (Portes & Zhou, 1994), religion

and language (Cattell, 1950) or the degree of economic and socio-political development (Brodbeck et al., 2000; Chemers, 2014). House et al. (2004) identified two clustering approaches. Physical climate clusters share similar characteristics in temperature, humidity and latitude. Regional clusters are in geographic proximity, share mutual language, religion or history. The ten resulting regional clusters include the Anglo cluster, Latin Europe, Nordic Europe, Eastern Europe, Germanic Europe, Latin America, the Middle East, Sub-Saharan Africa, Southern as well as Confucian Asia. As this paper aims at comparing the national culture of Germany to the regional culture of Latin America, the regional clustering of House et al. (2004) is the most appropriate model for the research.

Furthermore, Gupta, Hanges and Dorfman (2002) found that House et al.'s (2004) cluster classifications have proved to be reliable cultural indicators. National borders do not always determine a shared culture in this study. Accordingly, instead of focusing strictly on countries as one society, House et al. (2004) also take into account intra-national differentiations. The black South African sample was for instance clustered separately from the white South African sample as well as the French-speaking sample of Switzerland from the rest of the country, which underlines the high demand for accuracy of the GLOBE study.

The two cultures in focus of this study are the Latin American cluster which combines the ten countries Brazil, Mexico, Colombia, Argentina, Venezuela, Ecuador, Guatemala, Bolivia, El Salvador and Costa Rica (listed from highest to lowest population) and Germany as a sole society, partly taking into account its overarching Germanic cluster as well.



Graph 1: Latin America and the Latin American Cluster

The clustering technique is based on several factors such as religion, history and linguistics. In this sense, the Latin American cluster (in the following referred to as LAC) is based on its dominant influence of the Catholic Church with around 80% Catholics among its population (statista.com). Second, the clustered countries “share a common Roman law heritage, a common Iberian colonial past, and present-day patterns of social organization” (Rosenn, 1988, p. 128) as well as the Roman languages, in this case Spanish and Portuguese. The culture of this

cluster is mainly represented by the three values personalism, particularism and paternalism (Osland, De Franco & Osland, 1999). This appears in aspects like a strong sense of connection, openly using inter-personal relationships for own benefits (Rosenn, 1988) and a strong and exclusive bonds to family members and close friends. The average probability of classification into the hypothesized cluster is 75% while the next alternative cluster is the Latin European with an average probability of 16%. This shows high support for the cluster correlation, although Costa Rica and Guatemala turn out to be more similar to the Latin European cluster in fact (House et al., 2004). *Graph 1* shows the general Latin American region (in orange) and the GLOBE's sampled Latin American countries (in red).

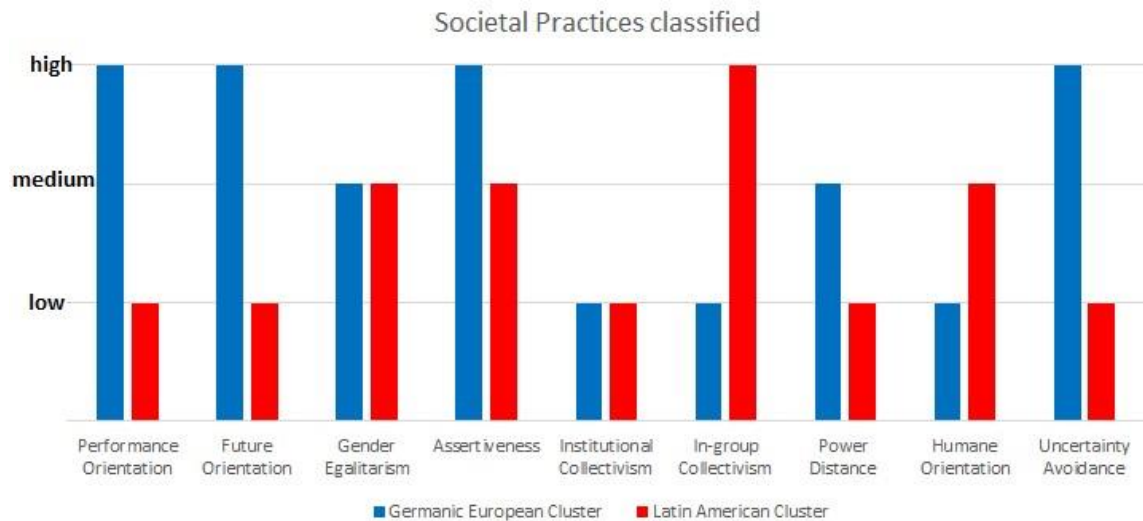
The Germanic cluster (in the following referred to as GEC) is not only based on the same language roots but primarily on historically shared understandings such as "a love for freedom and fighting" (House et al., 2004). Also religion plays a role for the clustering. The early Protestantism that started in the implied region led to a certain lifestyle, including values like honesty and orderliness. The cluster consists of the countries the Netherlands, Austria and Switzerland as well as the former West and East Germany that used to be split at the time the research started (House et al., 2004). As this study is focused on the culture of Germany as a whole, averages from the two former nations will be used for the cross-cultural analysis which is justified by the fact that the two initial societies show highly comparable results (House et al., 2004).

4.1.3 Cultural Differences

The cross-cultural analysis of House et al.'s (2004) dimensions shows several significant differences between the German and the LAC culture. This analysis concentrates on the performance scores instead of the value scores, which will be discussed further down. Taking into account that clusters can best be compared when putting them in contrast to the average of societies, House et al. (2004) further illustrate the clusters' societal values and practices categorized into low, medium and high-scores, using mean values.

When comparing the two societies, the main differences are shown in the GEC's high scores for Performance Orientation, Future Orientation and Uncertainty avoidance but low scores in Collectivism. The LAC on the other hand is high on Collectivism but has low scores in Performance

orientation, Future orientation and Uncertainty avoidance. These four dimensions thus become focus of this study.



Graph 2: Classification of Societal Practices

As in this study, Germany is seen separately from the GEC, it is however necessary to compare whether or not the GEC correctly represents the classification of Germany's practices. The comparison shows, that Germany fits the classification of its cluster in almost each dimension. The only exception is Germany's medium score for Future Orientation in contrast to the corresponding high score of the GEC, whereas Germany still reaches a high score in the medium field. Contrary to this result, Hofstede (1980) found that Germany is extraordinary high in the equivalent dimension Long-term Orientation, even exceeding the scores of the three same-clustered nations. Therefore, the dimension remains in the focus along with the other three dimensions.

Societies with **high Performance Orientation** like Germany tend to emphasize results over people and value initiative and directness. In organizational cultures, this implies a high reward for performance, a sense of urgency and seeing feedback and education as necessary for development and success. **Low Performance Orientation** societies like Latin America have a high respect for the quality of life, emphasize loyalty, seniority and tradition. In the work field,

competition is seen as punishment and feedback as judgmental. They prefer harmony over control.

High scores of **Future Orientation** as in Germany imply propensity to financially save for the future, more intrinsic motivations and the priority of long-term success. Organizations reflect these values by a longer strategic orientation, being more flexible and placing high priority on long-term success. **Low Future Orientation** is noticeable by lower economic success and a mentality of living the moment. In work environment, this makes itself felt by valuing instant gratification and immediate rewards as well as routine and repetitive tasks.

Individualistic societies like the German feature high social autonomy and independence, emphasis on rationality and less intimate interactions. In work environments, this means that decisions are rather made by individuals, selection is emphasized more than training and that compensation is based on direct individual's success. **Collectivistic** societies such as the Latin American are on the other hand characterized by a high emphasis on the relatedness to social groups, a slower pace of life, more extended family structures and indirect communication. Collectivism in organizations makes itself felt by the practices of making important decisions by groups, taking responsibility of employees' welfare by the company long-term relationships with employers and the overall feeling of a high interdependence between employees and their organizations, including making sacrifices for the sake of their firm's success.

High Uncertainty Avoidance as assumed in Germany can be seen by a high demand for formalization and recording, being orderly and more moderate in risk-taking. This reflects in organizational cultures by showing stronger resistance to change, less tolerance for rule breaking and implementing new products under risk aversion and tight controls. In contrast, societies with **low Uncertainty Avoidance** such as Latin America have more informal interactions, are less concerned about calculating risks and show more tolerance for breaking rules. This can be seen in firms especially through their rather high risk taking, for instance by facilitating new product developments in their initiation stage and minimal planning and controls.

What is striking when looking at the classifications of the two targeted clusters' mean scores, is the high deviation between the scores for values compared to practices. While the values of the LAC show high scores for all four focused dimensions, its practices only correspond to a high score in In-Group Collectivism, whereas all other three dimensions show in fact low scores. On the other

hand, the GEC has low value scores in the dimensions Future Orientation and Uncertainty Avoidance although its corresponding practice scores are among the highest of all clusters. This can be seen in *Graph 3* and *Graph 4*.



Graph 3: Values vs. Practices GEC



Graph 4: Values vs. Practices LAC

These findings show that the societies' values, as measured by House et al. (2004), do not mirror the corresponding practices. Maseland and Van Hoorn (2009) explain this occurrence by the theory of diminishing marginal utility, meaning that the nature of GLOBE's survey questions led respondents who in fact experience lower levels of a certain dimension to have a marginal preference for more of it, expressed by values, than respondents who experience a higher level of the same dimension. Brewer and Venaik (2010) however dispute this explanation by confirming the adequacy of the survey's measures, yet find no plausible reasoning for the phenomenon. Whatever is the cause for this intriguing result, it underlines the significant importance of measuring actual practices instead of values only. The debate about the validation of GLOBE's values lead to the primary focus on the practice scores in this study as they are assumed to better reflect a reliable view on actual cultures.

4.2 Expatriation and Adjustment

Although differences in national and organizational cultures mostly lead to challenges for expatriates, the amount of global migration is on the rise. The UN Department of Economic and Social Affairs' Population Division (2011) estimates a migrant increase of 27% between 1990 and 2010. Traditional expatriation that represents a time-limited assignment abroad with support of a local company is mainly attracting employees by offering career opportunities and professional development (Miller & Cheng, 1978; Brett & Stroh, 1995).

Unlike these intrinsic values of traditional expatriates, the motives for self-initiated expatriation (referred to as SIE) seems to be more complex and diverse (Suutari & Brewster, 2001). Doherty, Richardson and Thorn (2013) define self-initiated expatriates as “denoting internationally mobile individuals, who have moved through their own agency [...] to another country for an indeterminable duration” (p. 2). Richardson and McKenna (2006) differentiate between four motivation metaphors for SIE's: the motivation to explore, the motivation to escape, the financial motivation and the motivation to career building. Doherty, Dickmann and Mills (2011) on the other hand found that the main motivator for SIE's to go abroad is the desire for adventure, while being more likely to accept working in a less challenging position and for a lower salary. Other academics state that employment opportunities and professional development are primary motivators (Howe-Wals & Schyns, 2010). It must be stated however that most SIE literature deals with expatriates originating from rather developed countries, such as Western Europe and the US (Crowley-Henry, 2012; Cerdin and Pargneux, 2010, Richardson, 2006; Tharenou & Caulfield, 2010), whereas there is little research done on SIE's from developing regions like Latin America.

While expatriation offers many opportunities for people seeking for personal and professional growth, not all foreign assignments are successful. There is however much controversy on the exact numbers of failure rates. Many authors concentrate on US-based expatriates, such as Mendenhall and Oddou (1985), who claim a failure rate of 25-40%, rising up to 70% in regard to developing countries (Desatnick & Benett, 1978). Tung (1987) on the other hand contradicts these results by showing that only 7% of her surveyed US companies face failure rates of over 20%. As the discussion about self-initiated expatriation was however not introduced until 1997 by Inkson et al. (Doherty, Richardson & Thorn, 2013), the previously discussed studies concentrate on company-backed expatriation only. More recent results on SIE failure statistics are yet hard to

find. Nevertheless, many researchers agree that in case of SIE failure, a lack of adjustment is mostly the root of the problem (Bhatti et al., 2013), represented in either job dissatisfaction (Takeuchi, Yun & Tesluk, 2002) or early dropouts from foreign assignments (Black & Stephens, 1989; Gregersen & Black, 1990; Hechanova et al., 2003; Tung, 1981).

Black (1988) defines cross-cultural adjustment as “the degree of psychological comfort and familiarity an individual has for the new environment” (p. 122). He identifies three dimensions of adjustment: **General adjustment** involves the overall adaptation to the new environment. It covers factors that affect the daily life such as living conditions, transportation, food and weather. The assumption that previous foreign work experiences may foster this type of adjustment has not been supported as cultures differ too much between regions to achieve a specific skill to adjust overall. **Interaction adjustment** represents the level of comfort inter-personal relationships with nationals of the host country, inside and outside of the employing organization. It has been found to be the most difficult adjustment type to overcome. This is caused by differences in people’s mentality and societal interaction rules that can be hard to comprehend. **Work adjustment** represents the adaptation to the host organization, including new tasks, responsibilities and interplay with co-workers. Its aim is to meet the host firm’s expectations and being satisfied with the job, while being facilitated by similarities in the policies and requirements between previous work places and the new firm (Black & Stephens, 1989; Gregersen & Black, 1990). This three-faceted adjustment model has been supported by several studies (Black & Mendenhall, 1990; Black & Gregersen, 1991; Black & Stephens, 1989). It is therefore used as the base of this research in order to better capture interviewee’s self-concept of their adjustment level.

4.3 Diversity and Creativity

Creativity is seen as the precondition for innovation. For this reason, the following paragraphs often contain the term “creativity” while meaning both concepts. Their importance for competitive advantage and thus firm performance has well established (Bassett-Jones, 2005). The effects of cultural diversity on creativity are however much debated in organizational literature. Some authors argue that diversity leads to an increased commitment, a higher job satisfaction and a better interface with the market place (Cox & Blake, 1991; Iles & Hayers, 1997; Richard & Shelor, 2002). Especially in creative fields, diversity can foster creativity by providing a heterogeneous set of perspectives (Amabile, 1996). More pessimistic advocates on the other hand state that diversity leads to reduced cohesiveness, reduction in communication and the formation of different sub-groups, which results in distrust, lower firm performance as well as market orientation and customer focus (Ely & Thomas, 2001; Tajfel, 1982). Most researchers however agree that certain preconditions have to be met to gain an increased creativity level, such as trust and unified commitment (Isaksen and Lauer, 2002), understanding of individuals’ strengths and weaknesses (Henessy and Amabile, 1998) as well as appropriate team formations (Bassett-Jones, 2005).

Before one can benefit from cultural diversity, it is however crucial to initially understand the individual level of diversity, hence what moves expatriates to be creative. This aspect of motivation can be most basically differentiated into extrinsic and intrinsic factors. Extrinsic motivation refers to doing something to gain a specific outcome, either in form of positive rewards but also in the form of avoiding negative outcomes like critique or punishment. Intrinsic motivation on the other hand means to do something because the activity is interesting and enjoyable in itself which increases the learning outcome (Ryan & Deci, 2000). Deci & Ryan (1985) argue that when extrinsic motivation increases, intrinsic motivation is supposed to decrease to gain a higher level of creativity. In contrast, Amabile (1993) found evidence for the highest creative output from the presence of both motivation types, whereas the sole presence of extrinsic motivation will have a negative impact on creativity. This means that creativity is negatively affected when one does not enjoy the task but is mainly interested in the attached rewards. Furthermore, Henessy et al. (1989) found that a focus and training on intrinsic motivation can lead to an immunization against negative extrinsic motivation. To achieve this motivational level, Amabile (1996) identified six critical factors that must be avoided. These are evaluation,

surveillance, rewards, competition, restricted choice of implementation and an extrinsic orientation.

Moreover, various approaches exist on the influence of personality on creativity. Several authors claim that the level of creativity output depends on preconditions, such as personality traits and intelligence (Barron, 1988) or childhood experiences (Albert, 1990). Other theorists found that creativity is mostly influenced by factors of the social environment, which is known as the psychological approach (Amabile, 1996; Harrington, 1990). Amabile proposes three components that account for the creativity levels of individuals. Domain-relevant skills comprise technical and domain-related knowledge which depend on cognitive abilities and education. Creativity-relevant skills include knowledge of heuristic for novel ideas and a cognitive style, being dependent on training, creativity experience and personality. Task motivation as the third component contains attitudes and perceptions of the own motivation. It depends on the level of intrinsic motivation and the ability to minimize negative extrinsic motivation. This approach supports the idea that creativity is highly influenced by environmental and organizational factors that can be shaped by managers.

The key to competitive advantages for firms is therefore on one hand to foster its employees' motivation to be creative and on the other hand to create a firm climate that is supportive for cultural diversity. While several studies deal with the management of diversity as a whole (Isaksen & Lauer, 2002; 1976, Amabile, 1996), little is known on the proper management of certain cultural backgrounds. Due to the fact that cultures can vary significantly between societies, it is however important to understand these cultural specifications and learn how to benefit from the variety.

5. Methodology

5.1 Research Design

This study aims at finding answers to the question: “Which cross-cultural challenges affect creative Latin American expatriates in Germany?” In order to better frame the study and provide a logical order, three sub-questions have been introduced. The first sub-question asks for the most important differences that exist between the cultures of Germany and Latin American countries. The resulting advantages and challenges for Latin Americans’ in Germany are meant to be investigated in the second sub-question. Finally, the third sub-question aims at exploring how these issues affect the creativity and innovativeness of Latin Americans. As the research aims at investigating these questions from the perspectives of Latin American expatriates, insights into their attitudes and experiences are essential. For this purpose, a qualitative study is conducted. Qualitative studies are especially useful when there is no existing research on the topic (Thomson & Walker, 1998) as it is the case in this paper. The study is not designed to test a hypothesis but tries to explore subjective opinions and particular situations. It thus follows an inductive approach that is concerned with generating new theories. The study mainly uses an inductive approach as models such as the dimensions of House et al. (2004) are used as a basis for the interview. Partly, it also employs grounded theory in terms of the coding process. This method serves as “systematic guidelines for collecting and analyzing data to build middle-range theoretical frameworks that explain the collected data” (Charmaz, 2000, p. 509). It has been introduced by Glaser and Strauss (1967) and is concerned with studying meanings and perceptions.

In order to discover subjective knowledge from respondents, interviews were conducted. The advantage of this research method is that it enables a deep understanding through the opportunity of follow-up questions, authentic findings due to closeness to the interviewee and the capturing of non-verbal expressions (Symon & Cassell, 2012). The study uses respondent interviews, meaning that they aim at discovering interviewees’ perspectives (Lindlof & Taylor, 2002). The interviews are semi-structured, using an interview guide with a fixed set of questions that is identical for each interviewee. Beyond that, additional questions were asked that fit to the individual’s circumstances and mostly arise during the interview implementation. This enables a more fluid communication and the identification of significant background information. It also

gives interviewees the chance to express what they want to add to the already discussed topics (Corbin & Strauss, 1990).

5.2 Sampling

The interview sample consists of people who now live in Germany and originate from countries that are part of the LAC, i. e. Brazil, Mexico, Colombia, Argentina, Venezuela, Ecuador, Guatemala, Bolivia, El Salvador and Costa Rica (House et al., 2004). They came as self-initiated expatriates and are currently employed in any kind of creative or innovative position. Creativity in this sense means the development of any new products, services, technologies, work processes or ideas. Innovation refers to the application or implementation of any new products, services, technologies, work processes or ideas. These terms are seen in a very broad perspective and basically includes any professions that deal with creative problem solving so it is not only about creative and innovative industries directly but also includes people whose job is to find ways to deal with unknown situation. The sample should have a supervisor who is German and at least a few German colleagues. Additionally, interviewees are supposed to be in Germany for a maximum of seven years. Adjustment happens over time and although there is no agreement on an exact time axis, it is expected that after seven years living in a foreign country, the level of adjustment will be extremely high so that challenges have mostly been overcome and general differences are less noticed in daily life (Gullahorn & Gullahorn, 1963).

As the targeted population is somewhat limited, there was not much space for selection techniques. Respondent selection can be helpful for aiming at high-quality interviews in form of significant experiences or communicativeness (Symon & Cassell, 2012). In this case however, a sample size must be found that matches all of these four criteria: (1) originating from one of the clustered Latin American countries (House et al., 2004), (2) living in Germany for a maximum of 7 years, (3) having expatriated on self-initiation and (4) being currently employed in a creative or innovative profession. When addressing potential respondents, a specific population was chosen that aimed at finding interviewees of several countries of origin and at best more than one of each country in order to test the clustering theory of House et al. (2004) and to gain a higher validity. At the same time the sample must be big enough to reach a level of saturation. This means that a

point must be reached where no new themes are emerging (Corbin & Strauss, 2008). In order to achieve this saturation, the initial target was to obtain a sample size of 15 to 22 interviewees.

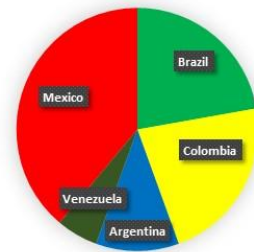
In order to find enough participants for the study, different channels were used. At first, personal connections to Latin American citizens as well as to people with Latin American friends and colleagues helped me to make contact to potential participants by third persons. Secondly, social media was the main tool for recruitment. One approach was the announcement of my concern in several online platforms where expatriates from the investigating countries are gathered to communicate, such as “Creativos en Berlin”, “Latinos en Alemania”, “Colombianos en Berlin” etc. A short post introducing myself and the study invited members to contact me. In order to achieve a higher response rate, I also looked through the profiles of potential participants and contacted those directly who seemed suitable for the sampling. Furthermore, companies that appeared most likely to employ creative or innovative Latin Americans were contacted by Email, including advertising agencies, high-tech firms, and dance schools with focus on Latin dances as well as restaurants offering Latin American cuisine. From 26 businesses that I contacted, 12 responded but with negative answers. On the social media channel, I interacted with 100 expatriates in total, either by contacting them directly or receiving mails of users who responded to my in-group postings. 26 of those 100 users did not answer at all, which could partly be caused by the fact that the social media site displays messages from non-friends rather hidden. 21 of the contacted users did not match the exact sought expatriate profile, and the other 37 had no time for the interview or stopped answering. The 16 remaining expatriates were finally interviewed. Additionally, four expatriates were found through snowball sampling by having contacts provided by third persons, of which all four agreed on the participation in the study. According to this sampling, 20 interviews were conducted. The resulting response rate is about 35% (20 of 57 who fit the sought profile).

I tried to find interviewees from all of the clustered countries at best. I was however not able to find participants from the countries Ecuador, Guatemala, Bolivia, El Salvador and Costa Rica, which is probably caused by their relatively small population of less than 16 million and their consequentially small expatriate population in Germany. According to the German statistics portal Statista (2015b) the number of people originating from one of the five countries living in Germany varies between 750 and 5.000, and in total account for only 13% of expatriates from the LAC living in Germany. I therefore concentrated on interviewing representatives of the other 87% of the population that were found already.

5. 3 Sample Characteristics

The sample comprises 20 individuals originating from one of the Latin American clustered countries (House et al., 2004) who moved to Germany on self-initiation within the last 7 years and work in a creative or innovative field. Most of the interviewees come from Mexico (7), followed by Brazil (5), of which one interviewee also had work experience in Argentina, and Colombia (5). The remaining participants originate from Argentina (2) and Venezuela (1). The five most populated countries of the LAC are therefore represented in the study. The sample distribution per country of origin and the respective percentages can be seen in *Graph 5*.

The biggest age group of the sample is represented by the 26 to 30 year olds (12), whereas the median age is 28,5 years. Twelve of the respondents are male and eight are female. The city with the highest number of respondents is Berlin (15), accounting for 75%, followed by Munich (3), Cologne (1) and Mainz (1). This is mainly affected by the interviewer's own residence in Berlin and the focus on expatriates that can be interviewed face-to-face. Most of the interviewees work in design (6), technology (6) or in the artistic fields, such as music and film production (3) or dancing (2). The rest works in consulting (2) and education (1). These distinctions are however not necessarily exclusive. The dancers for instance give classes and therefore also take part in educational tasks. The designers could also count as artists especially since some of them also sell paintings and other pieces. The time period that expatriates have been living in Germany until the research varies between four weeks and seven years. Eleven respondents used to live in other foreign countries before coming to Germany, while the other nine respondents only lived in their home country before expatriation. An overview of the whole sample is given in *Table 1*.



Graph 5: Sample by Origin

What is striking is that only one of the participants with at least three years living experience in Germany had prior foreign experiences. On the other hand, only one of the expatriates who are in Germany for a shorter period of time had no foreign experience before coming. This could indicate that those who came to Germany for an extended period of time chose this country for the sake of the destination itself, without traveling through other countries first, while the other group of people who are here for less time belong to the self-initiated expatriates that are mainly interested in adventure (Howe-Walsh & Schyns, 2010).

	Occupation (Industry)	Country of Origin	Gender	Age (years)	Time in Germany	Previous foreign
1	Graphic designer (Advertising)	Brazil	male	27	1 month	yes
2	Project coordinator (Consulting Group)	Mexico	male	26	1,5 months	yes
3	PR consultant (Start-up)	Brazil	female	28	3 months	yes
4	Art director (Advertising)	Brazil	male	25	4 months	yes
5	Graphic designer (Industrial design)	Mexico	female	25	5 months	yes
6	Software developer (E-commerce)	Mexico	male	31	6 months	yes
7	Software developer (Business Intelligence)	Colombia	male	29	6 months	yes
8	Project Manager (Power systems)	Brazil	male	40	1 year	no
9	Fashion designer (Fashion)	Venezuela	female	29	1,5 years	yes
10	Graphic designer (Advertising)	Brazil	female	30	2 years	yes
11	Software developer (Telecommunications)	Brazil	male	34	2 years	yes
12	Kindergarten teacher (Education)	Mexico	female	26	3 years	no
13	Graphic designer (Advertising)	Mexico	female	26	3 years	no
14	Art director (Film)	Colombia	male	30	3 years	no
15	Dancer (Arts)	Colombia	female	24	3 years	no
16	UI designer (Telecommunications)	Argentina	male	29	4 years	no
17	Project Manager (Automotive)	Mexico	male	38	4 years	no
18	Software developer (Energy supplier)	Colombia	male	27	4 years	yes
19	Boomer (Music)	Mexico	male	27	5 years	no
20	Dance choreographer (Arts / Education)	Colombia	female	34	7 years	no
			60% male, 40% female	Median: 28,5	Mean: 2,1 years	55% yes, 45% no

Table 1: Sample Overview

5.4 Interview Implementation

The semi-structured interview equals an open conversation, whereas the interviewer leads the interaction by asking the questions, digging deeper when necessary or eventually interrupting when there are misunderstandings (Kvale & Brinkmann, 2009). Apart from the leading role that is given by the nature of the interview process, the interviewee should not feel a power asymmetry as this may lead to biased answers (Kvale & Brinkmann, 2009). In order to create a friendly climate to the interviewees instead, I started the meetings with some small talk, asking about their well-being or specific questions on their country of origin. Often, I could bring in personal experiences from previous stays in the Latin American region to show them that I have personal interest in the topic. This could lead to a feeling of commonality and appreciation of their home countries and culture.

The interviews took place via face-to-face meeting or video-chatting. Interviews with respondents living outside of Berlin were all implemented via Skype due to geographical distance. Expatriates from Berlin could choose their preferred medium of communication, whereas only two people decided for video interviews. Place and time of the interviews were also selected by the respondents. Furthermore, people could decide whether they want to be interviewed in English or German. Choosing a language in which one can express best is important in order to avoid biased answers. Four people decided to communicate in German, the other 16 interviews were held in English. The interview length varied between 30 and 90 minutes.

At the beginning of each interview, I gave the interviewees two information sheets regarding informed consent. On the first sheet, the purpose of the study was described in detail, so that the interviewees knew what their answers are used for. The second sheet was about the voluntariness of participation and confidentiality. There, it was stated that interviewees take part in the study on a voluntary basis and that they can stop the interview anytime. It also said that all information are handled anonymously, including that answers are not assignable to specific persons and that certain data such as names or company names are not published. This gives them the freedom to freely communicate their feelings and individual autonomy (Kvale & Brinkmann, 2009). The respondents either signed the information sheet or agreed on the conditions orally.

During the interviews, I tried to take a pollster interviewer role when possible. A pollster tries to learn about the interviewee's attitudes while interfering as little as possible in order to gain

unbiased opinions (Rogers, 1945). While listening to the answers, I tried to show understanding and respect by nodding and reacting to experiences with the appropriate facial expression, such as shock or smiling. This gives the interviewee the feeling of appreciation and contribution (Ellis & Berger, 2003). The less talkative the interviewees were, the more I had to interfere by asking for more details of described situations, rephrasing questions or giving specific examples myself. This can be seen as the prober role, trying to dig deeper (Kvale & Brinkmann, 2009).

5.5 Interview Structure

The interview outline was structured into four sections, including several questions respectively. The first section includes personal questions such as demographic and factual data like the duration of stay, previous international experiences, preparation before expatriation and the nature of the current job. These questions could be answered shortly and help to assign answers to particular background characteristics. The second question set refers to the evaluation of personal adjustment in terms of all three adjustment dimensions, general adjustment, interaction adjustment and work adjustment (Black, 1990). Respondents were asked to actively assess their feeling of adjustment and further questions were asked to detect passive attitudes on the adjustment level. The link to creativity is covered in the next section by asking for specific situations of being creative and the role of management and cultural effects in this regard. This enables a deeper understanding of the certain tasks that interviewees are engaged in and provides insights into their organizational structures and creativity management.

The fourth and most crucial part of the interview covers a question set regarding cultural differences and their influences on personal growth as well as work performance. Findings from the GLOBE study (House et al., 2004) serve as the base for these questions. It is assumed that the highest cultural differences between Germany and Latin America can be found in the dimensions Uncertainty Avoidance, Future Orientation, Performance Orientation and In-group Collectivism. Questions to challenge these findings were asked. In this regard, questions were articulated neutrally in order to avoid bias. Only when the respondents did not come up with answers on their own, it was asked for the evaluation of the given directions proposed by House et al. (2004). I started with Uncertainty Avoidance, asking if interviewees have experienced any differences in this sense. Proposed examples of dimension-related specifications were presented in high amount

of rules and bureaucracy. The next question referred to Future Orientation by asking for the deviations in regard to planning and work orientation. Following, I asked respondents after their view on the aspect of Performance Orientation linked to the example of reward systems. I then proceeded with the investigation of the last dimension In-Group Collectivism by asking where group identity and individualism are more prevalent. Two final questions refer to the experienced influences of the found differences on the personal creativity or innovativeness and the perceived advantages from being an expatriate in terms of professional and personal growth as well as the level on creativity.

The complete interview outline can be found in *Appendix 1*. All interviews were audio recorded. Additional notes were taken during the interactions in order to have important answers at hand. This helped in revisiting certain points for subsequent questions (Burnard, 1991).

5.6 Data Analysis

The interview analyses were implemented simultaneously to the interview implementation when possible, in order to know when a point of saturation is reached. The first step was to transcribe the interviews. A mix of naturalized and denaturalized transcriptions were used (Oliver et al., 2005). Naturalized transcription refers to a technique where each word or sound the interviewee utters will be part of the transcript. It represents “the real world” (Oliver et al., 2005, p. 1274). Denaturalized transcripts rather focus on capturing the meanings and perceptions of the interviewee, disregarding unnecessary noise. The attempt in this study was to preserve the transcripts as close to the verbal statements as possible. As none of the interviewees were native in the spoken language however, some phrases were deleted or corrected in transcripts when it meant no falsification of the propositions. For example it happened several times that respondents mentioned translation issues (e.g. “let me think on the right translation for this”), asked for the time or made comments about situational aspects (e.g. “oh no, it starts raining”) or that incorrect grammar and wordings were used. The editing enables an easier readability and comprehension of the transcripts. Non-verbal vocalizations and drawn-out syllables were taken into account when contributing to the significance (e.g. “Oh yeah. Germans are sooo effective [laughs]”). Also long pauses or response tokens were written down in order to mark where

expatriates had to think about their answers and had no definite view on the aspect (e.g. “Hmm... I think so”).

After the transcripts were written and read through carefully, they were coded. At first, as many categories as possible were developed in order to identify central concepts that lead to finding answers to the research questions. This stage is known as open coding (Berg, 1989). All statements of the transcripts were translated into codes. Saturation was reached when no new codes emerged. It was therefore important to analyze the data simultaneously to the implementation of the interviews (Corbin & Strauss, 2008). After translating all information into codes, axial coding was applied. Here, categories were grouped together to identify subcategories (Burnard, 1990). An example can be found in *Table 2*. A list with all codes is attached in *Appendix 2*.

Category	Adjustment		
Sub-categories	General adjustment	Interaction adjustment	Work adjustment
Codes	<i>Weather influences people</i> <i>Excitement of new expatriates</i> <i>Difficulties with the German language</i>	<i>Germans are more for themselves</i> <i>Severity of finding German friends</i> <i>Germans are cold and reserve</i>	<i>Time management is better</i> <i>Only small deviations in the job tasks</i> <i>Creative people are more open</i>

Table 2: Example of coding

6. Findings

The analysis of the interviews resulted in the distinction of three overarching themes that aim to find answers to the research questions. The first theme covers the topic of culture. It represents the codes connected to the most important cultural differences that exist between the two studied societies Latin America and Germany and seeks for advantages and challenges that arise for the expatriates. Based on the findings of House et al. (2004), the four sub-categories correspond to the four dimensions Performance Orientation, Future Orientation, In-group Collectivism and Uncertainty Avoidance. The second theme comprises the theme of adjustment in order to detect how cultural differences influence their level of comfort and vice versa. Its sub-categories are displayed by the three levels of adjustment: general adjustment, interaction adjustment and work adjustment. This is important to discuss as adjustment can have a significant impact on work motivation and performance. The third overarching category deals with creativity. Codes displaying how the creativity level of expatriates is influenced by the cultural aspects are assigned to this theme. It seeks to find the correlations between the cultural aspect and creativity.

Each theme comprises several codes that are discussed in the following. Statements of interviewed respondents will serve as support for the analysis. It must be noted that the interviewee number that is indicated behind each citation is not congruent with the interview number as ranked in *Table 1*. This is done to avoid that answers are assignable to certain respondents in order to ensure interviewees' anonymity. I concentrated on codes that were mentioned multiple times in order to display a representative picture of the sampled perceptions and experiences. The following statements serve as examples to better picture the different opinions.

6.1 Culture

6.1.1 Performance Orientation

When asked whether or not Germans are more performance oriented in work life, it could be observed that indeed many interviewed expatriates stated a **higher seriousness for work** in German firms, including punctuality, honesty and concentration on work tasks exclusively. According to the respondents, Germany is assumed to have high standards for professionalism. It was mentioned that even though the work hours in Latin American countries are longer, people are in general lazier in terms of doing things at work that are not connected to the actual job specifications. Several respondents agreed that Latin Americans chat a lot of with colleagues instead of being focused on the assignment itself. Similarly, it was mentioned that a higher *preference for the enjoyment of life* can also be felt in Latin American companies. So Latin Americans are said to look for having fun in their jobs. This was however seen as one cause for bad time management.

“I think that Germans expect a lot of professionalism. In Latin America, many people are very lazy and even if we work more hours, we usually don’t work very hard. We do a lot of chatting at work for instance or other work-unrelated stuff. Here in Germany, people do that during lunch break or after work but when they work, they are concentrated.” -

Interviewee 10

Although hard work is assumed to be a highly demanded in German firms, several interviewees express that there is on the other hand also a high **respect for people’s leisure time**. While Germans see their work places rather as a place for seriousness, they are more engaging in leisure time activities to being able to release the work stress. Several expatriates mentioned that many Germans have hobbies they perform in the afternoon while this does not seem to be common in Latin America. Furthermore, the respect for this leisure time is higher from the side of the supervisors. German managements feel a higher responsibility for their employees’ personal well-being, legally as well as personally, whereas long working hours and regular overtime are frequently experienced in the home firms of the sample.

“[In Latin America] I have many experiences working until the morning. You need to take care about your health. It’s not good for your body to work so much and here people really respect that and when you have to work late they ask you if you are okay with it and give you free time for it the next day for example. [Germans] have this balance.” - Interviewee

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It could also be observed that interviewees claimed to have a **similar level of performance and professionalism in Brazil and Argentina**, whereas respondents originating from other countries saw a higher difference to Germany. Whereas it is hard to tell whether this is really the reality, due to the lack of experiences Argentinian and Brazilian expatriates had in other Latin American countries, it is still noticeable that the general work mentality in those countries differs from the rest.

Another interesting aspect is that in Germany it is seen that employees feel a higher **passion for their job**. Several interviewees express that Latin Americans are often forced to do a certain job. This is partly caused by bad economic situations that leave little room for selecting the field of work. Another reason is the younger age of starting an academic career. High school is often finished with sixteen or seventeen years so the decision for a profession starts quite early, whereas the flexibility to change the subject is less common, probably also caused by economic aspects and a lack of governmental support. Thirdly, expectations of family members who represent the strongest bond in Latin American regions, are stricter. People often follow the path of relatives instead of finding their own way. It also seems much more common in Latin America to let family members into vacant positions instead of choosing who is best for the job.

“In Latin America people start working more early. You have to decide what you want to do with 17. It’s not normal that you have one or two years to think about what you want to in your professional life so I guess people are harder on young people. So maybe they end up working in a job that they don’t really like.” – Interviewee 5

6.1.2 Future Orientation

The highest consensus among the sample regarding the four focused dimensions was experienced in Germans' preference for Future Orientation. This was especially felt by the **high amount of planning activities** in Germany, especially in regard to social life. This is seen in short-term as well as long-term perspective. In regard to the short term, it was felt by many small incidents such as planning dinner for Christmas in September already, planning a trip down to the last detail and using a calendar for everything. In this regard, respondents agreed that the German planning is also much more formal than what they know from their home countries. Private invitations are communicated through google calendars and the acceptance of an invitation is seen as a firm promise to show up, whereas it is common to change plans last minute in the Latin countries. Regarding the longer term orientation, expatriates explained to be surprised by the high amount of insurances Germans have and their well-defined long-term goals regarding their professional careers.

"One example is the Retirement Dream and also the huge amount of insurances [Germans] have. In Mexico, people do not look so much into the future." - Interviewee 5

The most frequently named cause for a higher long-term planning is the **economic and political stability** and the resulting future certainty in Germany compared to Latin American countries. Due to the fact that the economy as well as the political situation in many Latin American countries has been fluctuating a lot over the last years and decades, it is harder to predict how the environment will evolve in the future. Everything can change from one day to another which makes proper planning quite redundant. But also the short term is harder to plan for the respondents. While the infrastructure in Germany was valued highly, many Latin American countries suffer from hard traffic jams that lead to unpunctual busses and unpredictable journey times which makes it almost impossible to stick to a proper time management.

"There is no infrastructure in Colombia to plan so accurately. You don't know when you will come from one point to another because a lot can happen in the meantime." - Interviewee 17

Several interviewees however saw a huge disadvantage of the German planning culture in the **lack of spontaneity**. It makes it hard for some Latin Americans to meet with German friends on short

notice as they often have made plans already. This put pressure on some of the respondents to adapt to the future planning which was hard for some of them in the beginning. Most of the expatriates who are in Germany for a longer time period however mention to be better off with a proper planning.

“Germans have to plan everything. And because everyone else made plans, everyone has to fit in. This is often a stress factor for me because I am generally very spontaneous.” - Interviewee 4

In regard to the work culture, the differences in planning between the two cultures were less experienced by expatriates from Latin America but still noticeable. **Better time management and a more achievable goal settings** seems to be highly valued in German firms as it ensures an evenly distributed amount of work over the projects and diminishes frustration about not being able to meet the initial target.

“People [in Germany] rather stick to certain steps and due dates, whereas plans are often hard to implement in Colombia as they are more flexible. [...] Germans portion their work load into smaller steps and therefore not often feel stress. Timing is really important in Germany.” - Interviewee 1

Interviewees also mentioned that German firms have a higher focus on organizational growth but follow rather evolutionary processes when it comes to product development while always staying rather **risk-averse**. German businesses are said to be more focused on improving existing processes instead of developing disruptive products. This is connected to the mentality of trying to avoid uncertainties. From the perspective of the interview sample, Germans have a higher need to be safe in what they are doing than Latin Americans who are more open to try out new things.

“I think the German business culture in general is more focused on improving existing processes. So how things can be done a little better. It's not about disruption [...] People are more afraid of failing. So more planning for the future in the sense of not putting themselves in risk or delayed rewards.” - Interviewee 19

6.1.3 In-Group Collectivism

The most surprising findings were developed in the category of In-Group Collectivism. Although Latin America is expected to have significant higher values in this dimension than Germany (House et al, 2004), the answers were highly controversial. In terms of the social life, responses tend to agree on a **lower collectivist mentality** in Germany compared to most Latin American countries. This is linked to a higher personal autonomy. Germans tend to do more things on their own, prefer to make decisions on their own and finding solutions to problems by themselves, whereas Latin Americans are more communicating among each other, including strangers. They have more social group activities and also rely more on other opinions.

“In general, here, you see a lot of people doing things on your own. In Venezuela you always asks a friend to do stuff together.” - Interviewee 14

It was further mentioned several times that Germans are **less actively helping other people** but are indeed willing to help when they can. Germans were also said to be more reliant in helping others, which was felt in both the social and organizational environment. It seems that although there is more communication among Latin Americans, they act rather restrained when it comes to challenging problems.

“When you get to know a German very well and you ask for his help and he has the time, he will do it without problems. I think Germans are not intervening so much [when there is a problem]. But a Colombian would maybe not help you with your moving. When you ask him, he would say: Yes, maybe and probably he doesn’t show up in the end.” - Interviewee 17

In regard to group work in the organizational environment, the opinions are rather drifting apart. When asking which culture has more team work, the majority however said to see **more group working activities** in Germany. The biggest difference could be felt in regard to the experiences of expatriates from Argentina and Brazil, where people seem to be most competitive, although personal groups like the family seem to be more important in Latin American cultures. One interviewee assumed that there is simply less group work needed in German companies due to the high amount of rules.

“Since [in Latin America] we do not have many rules, it is not clear where my part starts and ends, so we have to communicate more. But that is not necessarily related to the group thinking. I would say that the Latin Americans persons identify equal or less than Germans as a group.” - Interviewee 5

Another cause for higher group work in Germany is seen in the **higher social safety** in Germany. Since the job market is more stable and positions are more protected by long-term contracts, employees do not need to prove themselves in front of their bosses. There is a **lower competition** and thus a higher group thinking strategy. From the view of the sample, Germans do not feel a high need to be better than their colleagues. It was also observed that there were **rather less rewards for individuals** in Germany, which strengthens the view of a lower competitive climate. Respondents also saw that there are **flatter hierarchies** which shows itself in the practice of supervisors helping employees more instead of just controlling them.

“I actually think that in Brazil, people rather try to work against others instead of helping them. Maybe because of the fear of losing the job. In Germany, the economy is better and people are not under such a pressure as Latin Americans.” - Interviewee 10

It was also noticed that Germans feel a **higher commitment to their jobs** and the company they work for. Instead of focusing on the individual performance, Germans are seen to be more interested in the overall firm output. Expatriates also experienced that Germans in stress situations rather help others when it means an improved team performance, whereas Latin Americans are less willing to spend their time on others' assignments in case their own work will suffer.

“Here, more people identify themselves with the work they are doing. That's a very good thing. For example by the way some people are talking about their jobs. It sounds they are having fun at it.” - Interviewee 11

It was also seen that although social and professional life are rather kept distant by German employees, the organizational team still uses a very **familiar climate** by organizing team activities in order to strengthen the team spirit in German firms.

“We have a lot of games in the office and we try to have a really united team. I don’t know if that is for the people to be happier at work and I think when you are happy you get to do a better work and maybe provide more innovation to the company.” - Interviewee 11

6.1.4 Uncertainty Avoidance

Most of the interviewees agreed that Germans have a high tendency for Uncertainty Avoidance. Some argue that this is part of the general German mentality due to a **fear of unpredicted outcomes**. This derives from an environment where technologies and infrastructure are able to measure and plan almost every step. Furthermore, a stable political and economic system supports a lifestyle of planning and standard procedures. One negative consequence from well-working systems is however noticed in the **inability to adapt** to unpredicted occurrences. It was noted several times that Germans have a tendency to avoid uncertainty due to their fear of the unknown.

*“Germans hate Uncertainty, because they forgot how to deal with things that go wrong.”
- Interviewee 6*

Uncertainty Avoidance is mainly experienced by a **high amount of rules and procedures**. This was for example felt in the German traffic, where there are much more rules than in Latin American countries or in the law where the government tries to set up rules in favor for most of the citizens like the law that limits the increase of rental prizes in Berlin. Rules within organizations were seen as beneficial for efficiency as standard procedures could be dealt with more easily and at the same time a lower need for supervision due to the fact that every step is clearly defined.

“There are in fact more rules in Germany so that you know exactly what to do and how [...] and it works. In Mexico, there is on the other hand more supervision needed because people do not have these clear rules and need more advice from their bosses. The German way is much more efficient.” - Interviewee 2

Another code that was mentioned a lot is the **high level of bureaucracy** in Germany, which is especially seen in social life and in many cases causes stress for the expatriates. This was especially felt in the public German offices such as the Jobcenter. Many expatriates were overburdened by

the high amount of papers they had to fill in. Two of the interviewees even had to involve lawyers in order to handle bureaucratic burdens which in turn had significant effects on their level of comfort. What was striking is that again those respondents from Argentina and Brazil were the only ones who expressed to have a similar bureaucratic system in their home countries. It was however noted that the bureaucracy in Germany brings faster results than those in Latin America.

“The bureaucracy is very high here. There are so many papers you have to fill in. That is something really stressful, especially when our German is not perfect.” - Interviewee 20

6.2 Adjustment

6.2.1 General Adjustment

When asking respondents after their motives to move to Germany, some stated to be mainly interested in exploring something new. This was especially the case for expatriates with little prior international experience. Most of the expatriates however mentioned to be driven by the job opportunities and the economic standards. Many of the respondents working in IT-related jobs told about the great range of opportunities they are offered in Germany due to the decreased number of German technical professionals. Creatives working in web agencies and the arts industry were mostly attracted by the city of Berlin as being famous as pool for creativity. It can also be drawn from the interviews that those who came to Germany at an older age are more looking for career building opportunities, while the younger sample was more interested in the international experience itself. Many of them moved to Germany straight from their parental home to become more independent and self-confident.

“It was not only the first time for me living abroad, but also to live away from my parents, so this alone made me grow so much.” – Interviewee 15

In regard to general adjustment, it could clearly be observed that expatriates who are in Germany for a short period of time, around three months, are very positive about their new environment. Their excitement for the unknown prevails over the cultural difficulties. They did realize some

differences between the two cultures- However they did not associate them with challenges but rather with adventures.

“It’s a new everything. [...] It’s kind of like dropping with a parachute on something completely new. [...] It’s an adventure.” - Interviewee 10

General adjustment was reached after a few years from the view of most expatriates. Latin Americans who are in Germany for a least two years all claim to have several German friends. Four of them are in a romantic relationship with Germans of which two even have children with their German partner. Those group of respondents were also able to speak German quite fluently already and stated to being used to all the procedures and bureaucratic systems Germany has. From an interviewer’s point of view, it could be felt that they have very well integrated into the German culture, too. It was also observed that expatriates who appeared to be more outgoing and extroverted at the interview found it easier to adjust to the new culture than more introverted personalities.

“I don’t feel any stress or being uncomfortable.” - Interviewee 5

Those respondents who are in Germany for around six to twelve months on the other hand were most concerned about cultural differences and **culture shock**. Whereas new immigrants were rather relaxed about not being able to speak German for instance, it was seen as a big barrier for expatriates with more than six months spent in the host country. Although it is not a real cultural challenge, difficulties with the German language were mentioned most as culture shock. But also other challenges were mainly represented by expatriates who are in Germany for the mentioned time span. This shows how people realize differences not immediately but rather after a routined life has established.

“I still have problems sometimes and then I tend to get stressed because I can’t understand everything. I sometimes do not feel complete yet because of that” - Interviewee 3

Difficulties with the language had quite little effect on work-related assignments as almost all of the interviewees work in companies where English is the official work language. It was however felt as an **indirect negative effect on work motivation**. Although all of the sampled expatriates mentioned that people have no problem to speak English also in the social hours in the company,

expatriates still felt to not being totally a part of the group when the national language cannot be spoken.

“I think the language problem had rather indirect effects on me. It was not that I had severe problems as I did not understand things but it was more that it stressed me a bit to not understand everything and this stress might have negative effects on the work performance then.” - Interviewee 11

The second most frequently mentioned **challenge** in Germany was the aspect of the **German weather conditions**. Although most of the expatriates do not have a problem with chilliness or rain, many feel that temperatures have a big impact on Germans' mood, leading to bad temper in the winter but happiness on warm days. This was challenging for several respondents as they are not used to being influenced by the climate that much. Some of them also felt the weather changes in their own mood. Especially when having a hard time in the new country, cold temperatures intensified the sad moments and even caused depressions for some.

“The main problem I have here is the weather. But I do not mean the weather itself. I could live with the cold. But it's the thing what weather does to people.” - Interviewee 1

An advantage of the German environment was however seen in the **high tolerance and openness** that was experienced by many of the expatriates. Almost all of the respondents felt welcome by Germany whereas some of them also explained to see differences in the tolerance for different nationalities, whereas the Latin American culture seems to be more accepted than others. Only one of the expatriates explained to have experienced severe problems with intolerance as he was beaten up by a group of Neo-Nazis. None of the other respondents seem to have faced any problematic incidents however.

“They are always curious when I tell them that I am from Brazil. I think Germans are quite open to Latin Americans. More than to other cultures. A few times, I told people that I am from Turkey, just for fun, and I noticed that the reactions were more negative.” – Interviewee 8

What was exclusively mentioned in a positive manner is the **high quality of life** in Germany. Several interviewees highlight the **excellent infrastructure**, especially those living in Berlin. Most of them are amazed by the punctuality of the trains, the regularity of German subways and busses

and the efficiently structured traffic situation. This gives them the ability to better plan their day but also puts pressure on them in terms of punctuality, a concept that is rather unusual in Latin American countries. Most of the interviewees were not used to being on time and thus had to learn how to manage time well when they came to Germany in order to not displease their supervisor, colleagues or clients. Another aspect of a high quality of life was linked to **better standards of safety and security** in Germany. On the one hand, this was experienced in the traffic, for instance when riding a bike in German cities compared to Latin American ones. On the other hand, it was mentioned in the context of criminality, of which rates are much lower in Germany than in most of the sampled countries.

“You feel safe here. When you go in the bus in Colombia, I cannot even read a book because then I don’t pay attention and someone may steal my cell phone or money from my jacket. Here, I can take the bike and be relaxed because even the cars respect you and in Colombia there is no respect for bikers. I also can go out at night without the fear of being killed. So the safety issue is very important for me.” – Interviewee 1

6.2.2 Interaction Adjustment

The cultural issue that was mentioned by almost all of the expatriates and is therefore regarded as the most significantly experienced cultural difference is the way of social interaction. The social German mentality represents the **biggest challenge for Latin American expatriates** who come to Germany to start a new period of life and try to integrate into the German society. One factor was that Germans are said to be **less friendly and more reserved towards strangers**. This was found by situations where people don’t greet each other even though they are at the same bus stop or people ignoring others although one knows one another. It was generally defined as the German coldness that was also explained by the weather conditions as mentioned above. Another aspect of this coldness was perceived in the **Germans seriousness and restraint of emotions** in daily interactions. While Latin Americans are communicating in a more familiar tone, including many hugs and kisses as well as giving each other compliments, Germans are said to be more rational in interactions, expressed by shaking hands or passing on any physical contact. It was also observed that Germans in general feel less comfortable to show emotions towards people they

don't know for a long time. Showing too much interest in another person can thus be seen as intrusive by Germans.

"For me, what was really strange was how people greet each other. In Mexico we always give hugs and kisses and here you only shake hands or just say 'hi'." - Interviewee 3

Directness was another aspect that was expressed several times as being relatively high in German communications. Although some interviewees described having problems with that in the beginning, it was in the end mostly seen as a positive aspect. Several interviewees felt that they are not liked by their conversational partner when they expressed something negative. In Latin America, it seems that people communicate on a more superficial level, avoiding to hurt someone's feelings. In Germany on the other hand, directness is linked to a higher efficiency as people can better recognize their mistakes and can thus work on them. In the long term, this was also identified as an advantage by the sampled expatriates. Many of them further mentioned to miss this directness when being back in their home countries.

"What I noticed is that people are so direct. I actually like that. But I think a lot of people do not like it that much. In Mexico, people always try to say nice things even if they mean something negative. So in the beginning that was quite hard for me because I thought that they don't like me but now I prefer it that way." - Interviewee 3

Another aspect of the German culture was the high pace of life in Germany and the constant demand for efficiency. It was associated with aspects such as a high level of impatience as well as showing a **low tolerance for changes** in daily activities. Germans are little patient, which derives from the short-term planning that often leaves no room for delays. Germans are constantly striving for efficiency, not only in the business culture but also in their daily life. Therefore, queues and waiting times can be stressful for Germans. Furthermore, they are seen to have a high favor for routines and standards which is linked to the Uncertainty Avoidance aspect. They are therefore rather skeptical when plans or procedures change as the outcome becomes less predictable. This has a negative impact on some of the interviewees in terms of their adjustment and work motivation.

“Sometimes clients are very pissed off when they don’t like what you do, sometimes they even leave the room in the middle of the session. This happens a lot when you do a substitution for someone else and they expect something different. And when someone else comes and does something different, then they are not so tolerant or patient.” -

Interviewee 17

The most discussed interaction issue is the **severity of making friends** in Germany. Most interviewees agreed that it is significantly harder to find friends among Germans, whereas it seems to be extremely easy with Latin Americans. This also led to stress for several expatriates in the beginning of their stay. Latin America has a much more open mentality towards strangers. People are constantly looking for new contacts and relationships and are glad to have as many friends as possible. In Germany, many people think in the opposite way. It seems to be much more important for Germans to have a couple of very good friends instead of having many acquaintances. Therefore, it takes much longer to become friends with a German. The difference is thus in the quantity of friends versus the quality of friendships. Most of the interviewees who are in the host country for at least two years realized this difference very clearly. Some of them observed that there is a higher likelihood for Germans to develop **deeper friendships**, including a higher reliability in helping each other and a increased level of trust.

“You don’t have so many friends here but when you are friends once with a German, you will be friends for a lifetime.” - Interviewee 7

6.2.3 Work Adjustment

When talking about adjustment to the work environment, time does not seem to play a significant role, so the U-curve is not applicable in this regard. Most of the interviewees show **positive responses to their work adjustment**, unaffected of their time spent in Germany and their level of general adjustment. Also expatriates who stated to feel little adjusted to the overall German culture expressed a high adjustment to their organizational culture. It was repeatedly stated, that two different cultures are perceived in Germany, meaning that the **work climate differs highly from the social climate** in Germany.

“For me, there are two cultures in Germany. I see the social and the professional culture that are both quite different. On the social level, I feel not really connected to the people. In the work culture I feel highly connected. From a scale of 1 to 10, I would go with a 9.5.”

- Interviewee 1

Many interviewees feel that their job in Germany does not differ a lot from the job in their home countries. This is caused by doing the **same tasks and similar interpersonal work climates**. It was especially experienced by those working in highly creative industries such as dancing or advertising companies. It was mentioned that the job tasks for these sectors as well as the people working in them are hard to distinguish between nationalities. Artists thus expressed to experience very low cultural differences in regard to their work environment. It is also mentioned that **creative people tend to be more open** for unknown things and foreign people so that it appears easier for those professional groups to fit into the work environment of a foreign job.

“I guess we have different processes but it’s still very similar to the jobs that I had before. I think I have luck to work in an industry where the communication in general is the same in each agency around the world. They all have a very similar culture, same lifestyle.” –

Interviewee 15

Other than the nationality of a company, interviewees saw bigger impacts on the way of working depending on **size and maturity phase of the company**. Work structures seem to differ more between big and small companies than between national work cultures. Especially working in a start-up firm had a big influence on the work climate of interviewees and debilitate the influence of cultures. It was explained that start-up’s have a much higher time pressure due to a smaller capital in terms of finance and employees. Also the communication in new firms is often not well established so that procedures are not existing yet.

“A start-up environment usually has a different aspect on the culture that is not German culture. You have lower cultural boundaries and everybody knows that. It is not so attached on the country itself. [...] A start-up is really a different world from an average company.” - Interviewee 13

What has been experienced as a disadvantage of the German culture is the high **differentiation between the social and the work life**. As mentioned above, Germans tend to engage in more non-

work activities, also having more non-work friends whereas many Latin Americans report that colleagues and friends are rather mixed in their home countries. So while Latin Americans rather have a beer together with work associates, Germans tend to have friends that are not employed in the same company. Due to the reservation towards getting to know new people, many Germans have little interest in spending time with others than their well-known relatives. So, although most of the German colleagues are friendly and helpful at work, it is still hard to develop social relations to them outside of the work place. This was seen as a big disadvantage and led to isolation of those who had no other contact point of socializing than the organization.

“I can see that [Germans] often have no interest in becoming friends with you outside of work. I think there is a big distinction between the workplace and the social life. From many people I have no idea how their personal life looks.” - Interviewee 12

6.3 Creativity

What was striking was the relatively high amount of codes mentioning the general **support for employees** in Germany that led to a higher creativity. The German boss is less seen as a dictator or the enemy as it seems to be the case in several Latin American countries but as a supporter for new ideas. Therefore, many Latin Americans felt to be willing to propose unusual ideas. As a result, they felt freer to act out their creative mindset. There is also a higher demand from German managements felt for **employee contribution** which makes expatriates feel taken seriously and valuable. Supervisors in Latin American countries rather seem to have clearer expectations of employees while German supervisors rather value alternative ways of thinking. It was thus observed that in Germany, there tends to be more **trust and confidence** in employees' skills by the supervisors. This underlines the statement that there are two culture in Germany. While in daily interactions, Germans dislike unknown practices and are more reserved towards unpredicted paths, they are very welcome in the creative business world. Also the familiar climate that is missing in the social life in Germany, is found in German organizations.

“Our choreographer is very supportive to us. He doesn't only want to implement his ideas but he really tries to get input from each one of the group. So sometimes when we have a new project, a new song that needs a choreography, he lets us perform the song

individually without any instructions, so that he can see how we interpret it and he then takes a lot of ideas from it to come up with the final choreography.” - Interviewee 20

The aspect of having a more **direct communication** was also seen as being effective on the one hand and fostering creativity and innovativeness on the other. Tasks are communicated more clearly and feedback is easy to understand. Although supervisors in Germany are more open for new ideas in general, they still seem to express negative points when they think that the assignment turns into a wrong direction in order to avoid unnecessary work. It has very positive effects on a better time management but also ensures that people know if they are on the right track or not. Several expatriates tell about being rather unsettled about the typical positivist American communication, where mistakes are concealed by compliments and feel more comfortable with the German way of giving feedback.

“I think the direct communication does help me to be creative because I better understand what the people expect from me. I get very clear feedback and when I did something not so well I will know it and I then work in another way.” - Interviewee 3

Another factor that was experienced in German firms is the aspect of having more **flexible work hours**. It ensures that people can use the best time and location to be productive. On the other hand, it again demonstrates trust and respect for the employees by diminishing direct supervision. It was hardly known as a practice in Latin America and was generally perceived as a booster for creativity. Again it seems that this practice contradicts the German value of Uncertainty Avoidance. It could however also be seen as an aspect of higher efficiency as employees can choose the best conditions for themselves to be creative.

“In Germany I always had quite flexible working hours. This allowed me to organize my time by myself. So when I had a lot of ideas in my head, I just stayed longer to work on them without the fear of losing unpaid hours. I then came in later the next day for example. This is very beneficial in my opinion as people are not restricted to times.” - Interviewee 11

This humanistic view on the supervisor is not only seen in relation to work tasks but also in the sense of a higher **social responsibility**. Employees feel better covered when it comes to contract cancellations for instance, which could already be observed in the discussion about Performance

Orientation. Most interviewees expressed a positive influence from this on their creativity as they have an increased work motivation.

“Companies [in Germany] are in my opinion much more concerned about employees than in Latin American companies. I don’t know if it’s by law or by culture, one thing that happened for instance is that the company said: ‘We will shut down the project but we will try to get everyone a good position.’ That would not necessarily happen in Brazil. They would say: ‘We are sorry, you are on your own now’.” - Interviewee 19

Better **time management and a more achievable goal settings** were also generally seen as being a booster for creativity. It ensures an evenly distributed amount of work over the projects and diminishes frustration about not being able to meet the initial target. While many Latin American companies seem to have difficulties to start with projects on time and work on them continually, many employees felt very high pressure in the end of the projects. In Germany on the other hand, projects are better matched to the time axis so that expatriates have less stress. This enables them to concentrate on the current step of the process, regarding different creative ideas, instead of watching out for how much time is left, which represents a barrier for creativity.

“People [in Germany] rather stick to certain steps and due dates, whereas plans are often hard to implement in Colombia as they are more flexible. [...] Germans portion their work load into smaller steps and therefore not often feel stress. Timing is really important in Germany.” - Interviewee 1

What was additionally seen as supportive for creativity and work performance in general was the **expatriate status** itself. From the perspective of the sampled expatriates, international experience lead to several advantages for the creative output, including to command a **repertoire of diverse inputs and ideas**, having **inspirations from multiple environments** and being able to transfer these aspects into valuable contributions. This is not only beneficial for the expatriates themselves but also for the companies. Several interviewees explained to have experiences where their cultural background led to new campaign or ways of problem solving. Especially originating from a rather underdeveloped region holds a huge advantage for creative thinking due to the fact that daily life itself in Latin American countries requires alternative ways of problem solving when there is no given way of doing something. Furthermore, the network of expatriates is growing extensively which leads to **new possibilities of cooperations** and international exchanges.

“My set of tools is not a set of tools that I made up in one country only, it’s something that I grabbed a little bit from each culture so it gives me a broader set of tools and inspiration.”

- Interviewee 10

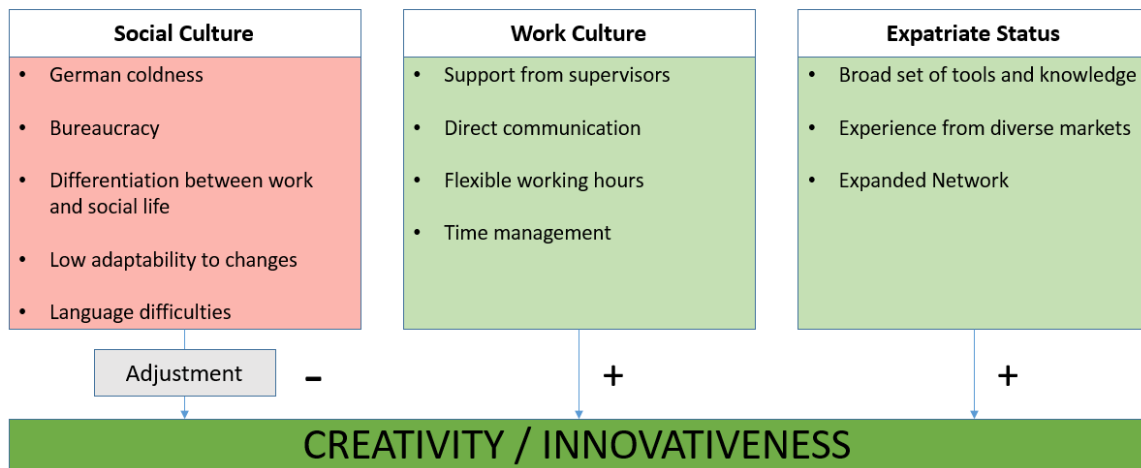
On the other hand, working in Germany has also brought a lot of opportunities for the expatriates themselves as they gained new insights. A highly inspirational environment was especially felt by expatriates living in **the city of Berlin** and primarily from those doing arts and design. The reasons named for this were a high variation of different cultures and highly creative surroundings as well as people. But also expatriates working in more technical fields felt supported from the Berlin surroundings due to the high amount of start-ups it holds which encourages people to think more about marketing their own ideas. Furthermore, transnational experiences were not only assumed to have positive influence on creativity but also on expatriates’ **personal development** due to having obtained the skill to deal with challenges that an emigration entails. Expatriates stated to be more independent and self-confident after the transition.

“For me it is a proof that I get out of my comfort zone. I never lived away from my family. It’s the first time that I travel out of Mexico. I became more open. I have to think all the time for myself, like how to manage my resources or my time and I have to be careful with my money, the way to buy things, to pay for everything including gas or my phone bills. That made me much more mature.” - Interviewee 12

While the work-related aspects were almost completely regarded as creativity supporting, the general German culture was rather seen as having a negative influence on creativity. Especially the themes of **having a hard time finding German friends** and the **high differentiation between social and work life of Germans** were decreasing the general work motivation. Furthermore, the **low adaptability to changes** that is also linked to being impatient with new structures or colleagues was experienced as negative effect on the work motivation. These three aspects together with the **difficulty of speaking the national language** were all reported to have indirect negative effects on the level of creativity.

6.4 Summarized Findings

To best illustrate which cultural differences affect self-initiated expatriates' level of creativity, a small framework was developed that is presented in *Graph 6*. Perceived advantages and disadvantages of the German social and work culture are shown with their link to creativity.



Graph 6: Effects of Cultural differences on Creativity/ Innovativeness

The framework covers the three segments social culture, work culture and expatriate status. It can be observed that the general German culture entails many challenges and difficulties for expatriates from Latin America, especially linked to the high differences in interactions. These challenges are by the sample experienced as having negative indirect effects on creativity as they influence the overall motivation for work assignments. Also problems with the German language were seen to negatively affect adjustment, which in turn has indirect effects on creativity. Adjustment is thus seen as a mediator between differences of the social culture and the level of creativity. Aspects regarding the work culture are however all perceived to have positive effects on expatriates' creative output, including the high support from supervisors, direct feedback, flexible work hours and a better time management. Regarding the third segment about the expatriate status itself shows that creativity levels benefit from experiences as an expatriate, linked to a broader set of tools, knowledge about multiple markets and an extensive network of stakeholders.

7. Discussion

Goal of this research was to find out how self-initiated expatriates from Latin America perceive what the most important cultural differences between Latin America and Germany are, which cross-cultural advantages and challenges are experienced and how they affect their level of creativity. The findings of the interview study gives insights into the perceptions and mindsets of Latin American expatriates. They present several significant differences between the two cultures as well as correlations between cultural differences and the level of expatriates' creativity and innovativeness. The most crucial findings are presented in this paragraph.

7. 1 Cultural Differences

SQ 1 and SQ 2 seeks for the most important cultural differences between Germany and Latin America from the experience of Latin American self-initiated expatriates and the resulting advantages and challenges. The findings of this research show that the biggest difference is felt in the form of **social interactions**, identifying Germans as being rather reserved and autonomous, while Latin Americans are more open towards strangers and prefer group activities, representing the biggest challenge for the sample. Further significant differences were identified by the proposed dimensions of House et al. (2004). High **Future Orientation** in Germany faced the second highest agreement rate among the interviewees. Prevailing for this theme was the high favor for planning and efficiency. Negative side effects were however be observed in the loss of spontaneity. In the work culture, it showed itself by better structured time management and flexible working hours. High **Uncertainty Avoidance** in Germany was associated with an inability to deal with changes and a resulting German fear of the unknown. It was seen in evolutionary innovations as well as a high amount of procedures and bureaucratic practices. Whereas many expatriates felt stressed by the bureaucracy in their social life, it was rather regarded to be beneficial for businesses as it supports efficiency. A higher **Performance Orientation** in Germany was also experienced to be prevalent by most of the interviewees, which is linked to a higher seriousness for work tasks as well as a higher commitment to the job, which was generally seen as a positive aspect. On the other hand, there was also a high respect for employees' leisure time and a high differentiation between the social and work life, which was rather frustrating for several expatriates as they hoped to form friendships among their colleagues. The findings for **In-**

Group Collectivism showed the most controversial views. While expatriates experience a high autonomy of Germans in their social life, German businesses have a relatively high amount of group work. This phenomenon was expected to be influenced by several aspects such as a better economy, safer social structures and lower hierarchies in Germany that diminish the need for competition within companies. It was also noted that German management is more willing to support familiar team structures by having regular meetings, providing snacks and organizing team activities inside the work place. The findings for In-Group Collectivism in regard to creative expatriates are thus differing to the findings of House et al. (2004) that refer to work climates in general.

What is also striking was the notion of a higher firm commitment of German employees that is supported by a high responsibility from the management towards employees in terms of social safety as well as the high demand for employees' work contribution in terms of new ideas and strong confidence in their skills. The support from supervisors was not only seen to promote personal feeling of belonging but also to foster creativity. These aspects could be seen as part of the **Humane Orientation** which was introduced by House et al. (2004). He proposes that societies with high values in this dimension are generally more concerned about others and more sensitive towards them. Although Germany is extremely low in this dimension, it seems that in terms of organizational culture, they have a relatively high Humane Orientation compared to Latin American countries. On the social level, it can however be seen that Germans are indeed rather insensitive and less considerate towards others, especially strangers. This can be measured in Germans' high social autonomy, their impatience and less active helping. As several expatriates have found, the interaction culture in Germany differs significantly between social and work environments.

Most cultural research proposes the idea that organizational cultures are highly dependent on the national culture of their country of origin (Hofstede, 1980; House et al., 2004). This study has investigated the experiences of twenty creative Latin Americans and found that these correlations are highly reduced among the sample. While creative and innovative businesses are little affected by national cultures, they tend to be rather influenced by a shared set of values and practices that applies globally. This shared creative culture diminishes the challenges for expatriates working in the field. Germans as well as others seem to be less affected by their national values than by the

traditional creative work climate. This supports the concept that creative firms differ highly in their work culture from other organizations (Martins & Terblanche, 2003).

7. 2 Expatriation and Adjustment

Further challenges and advantages for self-initiated Latin American expatriates were identified by their expatriate status and their levels of adjustment. The reasons behind expatriation were found to be split in two groups. Employment opportunities and professional development were the primary motivators, comparable to the study of Howe-Walsh and Schyns (2010). This is especially prevailing for the older expatriates and those who experienced prior international stays. These expatriates could benefit from increased financial conditions and career building opportunities. Expatriates working in high-tech professions further have the advantage of a broad range of job offers. The desire for adventure as proposed by Doherty, Dickmann and Mills (2011) were mainly seen in the answers of the younger sample. Their findings of expatriates accepting to work in less challenging jobs can however not be applied to this group. Very few respondents are employed in positions that require lower academic skills than they have acquired.

General adjustment assessment of the sampled expatriates shows high support for the suggested U-curve by Gullahorn and Gullahorn (1963). New immigrants were very enthusiastic and see the transition to another culture as adventurous. Expatriates who have been residing in Germany for a longer period of time rather suffer from culture shocks and those who are in the host environment for several years feel highly adjusted, including having deep German relations and speaking the national language. Difficulties with the German language were mentioned as the biggest challenge, followed by the cultural differences mentioned above. In terms of non-cultural factors, the German weather was seen as having negative consequences for expatriates, especially due to the high interdependence between climate conditions people's mentality. Positive aspects were mainly seen in the German infrastructure as well as in safety issues. **Interaction adjustment** was the most discussed topic among the interview sample of Latin American expatriates and represented the biggest challenge. The most critical point of interactions was observed in the differing views about social relationships. While Germans are rather interested in having a few deep friendships, Latin Americans commonly try to have as many acquaintances as possible. The biggest difference in social interaction is thus presented in the

aspect of German quality versus Latin American quantity of social relations. **Work adjustment** on the other hand was least affected by the time of residence in the host environment. It was generally experienced positively, also by expatriates with a rather low level of general adjustment and those who live in Germany for only a few weeks. This is mainly associated with the view that organizational cultures do not differ a lot between countries. This was especially communicated by expatriates working in highly creative fields such as designers and artists. The proposed U-Curve model (Gullahorn & Gullahorn, 1963) is thus not represented in regard to work adjustment for the creative sample.

7.3 Creativity

SQ3 aims at finding how previously discussed issues affect the level of creativity of self-initiated Latin American experiences. The research shows that the German **social culture** has a rather negative impact on the creativity and innovativeness of the interviewed expatriates. Especially the German coldness and high differentiation between the work and the social life were experienced as negative effects on creativity, as well as the low adaptability to changes. Another non-cultural factor was observed in the challenge of not knowing the national language. Although most of the sampled expatriates work in companies where English is the official language, not being able to freely communicate with German colleagues was negatively linked to creativity. Furthermore, the high amount of bureaucratic processes leads to severe stress for many of the asked expatriates. All of these factors did however not directly affect the creativity of expatriates. They rather show to have negative influences on the level of adjustment, which in turn was experienced as diminishing work motivation and as a result the creativity output. This underlines the importance of motivation for creative assignments as stated by several authors (Amabile, 1993; Deci & Ryan, 1985). Extrinsic motivation is assumed to be lower in Germany, as rewards for outstanding work of individuals is less supported by managers to avoid high competition within work teams. It was however found that several expatriates feel motivated to perform well in order to keep their working visa which requires a work contract. Others saw the advantages of adding the German work experience to their CV as a valuable qualification for future applications. Expatriates might thus feel a higher extrinsic motivation for their creative jobs than their German colleagues.

In regard to the **work culture**, significant effects on creativity were seen as positive. High support from supervisors and the direct communication in terms of giving feedback were received as supportive and trust-building. Flexible working hours and a better time management further allows the interviewees to better structure their work and use the most efficient way of working. Moreover, negative social aspects as the coldness and low adaptability to changes were not applicable in the work environment as the two cultures are perceived as contradictory. The German work climate mainly supports intrinsic motivation. The six critical factors identified by Amabile (1996) were seen as being prevented in German firms. Surveillance is reduced by less supervision as for instance allowing employees to work from home, evaluation, competition and rewards are avoided by supporting group work. The restricted choice of implementation has shown to be minimized as supervisors value alternative ideas. Together with the prior analyzed prevention of extrinsic motivation, immunization against negative extrinsic motivation is relatively high which means that employees have less fear of negative consequences from their actions (Henessy et al., 1989).

The **expatriate status** were additionally seen as having positive influences on creativity from the view of the interviewees. A broader set of tools and knowledge was seen as the main advantage expatriates bring to firms, comparable to the result of Amabile (1996). Several respondents report to having successfully implemented ideas picked up from their home countries into the new work assignments. The concept that employing expatriates leads to a reduced cohesiveness and formation of sub-groups (Ely & Thomas, 2001; Tajfel, 1982) was not reflected by the interview sample. In contrast, they experienced well-working group work activities in their German firms. Instead, expatriates as well as their companies can benefit from diverse work experiences among expatriates and expanded networks to far distant locations and stakeholders. The study therefore shows that from the view of self-initiated expatriates, team diversity bears mostly advantages for the overall firm performance.

8. Conclusion and Practical Implications

Most cultural research proposes the idea that organizational cultures are highly dependent on the national culture of their country of origin (Hofstede, 1980; House et al., 2004). This study has investigated the experiences of twenty creative Latin Americans and found that these correlations are somewhat reduced among the sample. A common work culture of creative businesses rather unifies creative industries globally while they show a low sensitivity for national cultural influences.

It was further experienced that Germany has a very high differentiation between the national and organizational culture, where particularly social values are quite contradictory when comparing the work life to the overall country practices. While on the firm level, expatriates benefit from humanistic values such as support from supervisors, trust in employees and the maintaining of familiar climates, most Latin Americans miss these aspects in their social interactions in Germany.

The identified challenges are thus mainly linked to non-work factors. The biggest obstacle for Latin Americans to adjust is the reserved mentality of most Germans. Many expatriates have difficulties with finding German friends, which is even worsened by a high separation between work and social life. Other challenges are felt by the high bureaucracy in Germany which is often hard to overlook for foreigners as well as the inability of speaking the national language.

Although none of these factors relate to managerial responsibilities, it is still advisable for employers to help expatriates overcome these challenges as they can have strongly negative effects on employees' general well-being and adjustment. This in turn eventually diminishes their motivation to work for the best possible outcome and thus impedes their level of creativity which represents a disadvantage for the overall firm performance. Therefore, the following implications are suggested:

The main challenge presenting social interactions is probably the hardest to overcome. One solution to help expatriates find social contacts proposes to organize regular after-work meetings on a voluntary basis. This would help expatriates to better integrate into the host country and at the same time may strengthen the team spirit.

To help expatriates dealing with bureaucratic processes, an introduction seminar could be offered for new employees where all important procedures are explained that are linked to living in Germany, including the handling of papers as well as introducing important German customs.

What is also recommended for firms with many expatriates is the employment of an expert in terms of legal counseling for foreigners.

The process of learning a new language which represents a naturally emerging problem for expatriates who move to a foreign-language country could be facilitated by organizing internal language courses or alternatively cooperating with an external language school in order to offer reduced prizes and courses that fit to employees' work schedules. Also tandem programs could be beneficial to engage in, where expatriates pair up with native employees to improve speaking skills during social hours. This would simultaneously support a higher social integration.

While it can be argued here that these procedures may be costly and thus unprofitable for a company, it must be noted that expatriation, when managed properly, indeed leads to benefits for a firm's creativity or innovativeness from the perspective of the creative sample. Accordingly, most of the expatriates felt personal benefits from being an expatriate in terms of improved creativity while at the same time felt to contribute to the overall firm performance by their varying way of thinking. From the point of view of expatriates, diversity thus serves as a valuable source for creativity. Companies not employing expatriates should therefore engage in diversity management in order to benefit from new ideas and mindsets and increase their competitive advantage in the long run.

This study contributes to existing literature by giving insights into the creative and innovative industries where it is found that correlations between national and organizational cultures are increasingly invalidated.

9. Limitations and Future Research

Despite its strengths, the study has several limitations offering directions for future research. First of all, only expatriates from five of the ten clustered countries were interviewed. Although the neglected countries are rather small in total population as well as population of immigrants living in Germany, it would be interesting to inspect whether differences exist to their experiences. Additionally, the study uses the clustering approach that is introduced by House et al. (2004) by regarding the Latin American cluster as a conjoint culture. Its findings however reveal that the views of Brazilians and Argentinians differ in several aspects from the perceptions of other respondents. It is therefore assumed that Latin America comprises more than one cultural cluster, at least in terms of the inspected dimensions. This could be a matter of outdated findings by the GLOBE project as it is found that the Latin American regions has faced many transformations within the last years due to globalization and political changes (Gwynne & Cristobal, 2014). It is therefore recommended to research altered cluster models.

Another limitation of the research was that neither the interviewer nor the interviewees are native English speakers. This is especially prevalent in the case of Latin Americans where the general proficiency in English skills is found to be relatively low (EF EPI, 2015). Although the interviewees have a rather high educational background, it could still be felt that some of them struggled with English expressions. Also there might have been misunderstandings by the way questions were asked. This communication hurdle could have led to falsified interpretation and conclusions. A further potential response bias could be found in the fact that interviewees might feel less open to express negative feelings about the German culture towards a German interviewer, although it seemed that most of them felt quite open to speak out on negative views as well.

Additionally, 75% of the interviewed expatriates live in the city of Berlin. Resulting from the findings, Latin Americans experience the environmental culture in Berlin slightly different to other cities as it is associated with a high openness and affection for creativity in general. It might be interesting for future studies to interview expatriates from a higher number of German cities in order to detect differences in the host culture between different parts of Germany.

Furthermore, the study exclusively analyses experiences from expatriates working in the creative or innovative fields with differing levels in creativity. It is recommended for future studies to analyze expatriates working in more traditional fields in comparison to see deviations in the

particular work cultures. What could also be done in future research is to take into account managers' opinions in order to include both, the perceptions of employees as well as employers and middle managers. Supervisors could evaluate creative or innovative performance more objective than expatriates themselves and assess the benefits for overall firm performance accordingly.

What would further be of high interest is a longitudinal study that aims at detecting how the synergies between cultural differences and adjustment behaves over time as several interviewees assumed culture to become increasingly negligible with growing globalization and internationalization. As mentioned before, this study only covers a small fraction of expatriates living in Germany. Next to the Latin American immigrants, there are however also expatriates from North America, Asia and Oceania, Africa as well as other European countries. In order to complete the study on self-initiated expatriates in Germany, these other regions should be analyzed. In this sense, an extensive study such as the GLOBE project would be highly enlightening for German managers who are interested in benefiting from the employment of culturally diverse expatriates.

10. References

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11. Appendices

Appendix 1

Interview Outline

Section 1

1.1: When did you move to Germany and how long have you lived here in Germany?

1.2: Have you lived here in Germany before? Have you had another international experience before? Have you worked in your home country before and for how long? How (if at all) have you prepared your stay in Germany (including language training etc.)?

1.3: What is your current job and how long have you had it? And is this your first job here in Germany? Have you secured this job before moving to Germany? Is this a permanent or temporary position? How long do you plan to stay here in Germany?

1.4: What exactly are you doing in your current job? Which company are you working for? What is your role and your main tasks? How is your job related to creativity or innovation? Are you developing and/or applying new products, services, technologies, work processes or ideas?

Section 2

2.1: How well do you as an expatriate, feel adjusted to German culture (adjustment means that your level of comfort with being an expatriate is quite high and your level of stress is quite low)?

2.2: Have you experienced any culture shock here in Germany (that is, after arriving in Germany, were you confused or frustrated regarding differences between Italy and Germany)? How (if at all) were you able to deal with culture shock?

2.3: How well do you feel adjusted in relation to your work tasks, in relation to interacting with Germans inside and outside of your workplace and in relation to non-work factors such as living conditions, food or transportation? Can you say how any of this might influence your creative or innovative work?

Section 3

3.1: As mentioned before, we are interested in your creativity and innovation-related performance. Can you please give an example from your workplace (for example, a project or a

situation) when you were highly creative or innovative (if possible, please talk about the most recent incident)? What did you do exactly? What (if anything) in your workplace has helped you to be creative or innovative? Has your expatriate status or your cultural background played any role in this example (if so, how?)

3.2: We are now interested in the relationship with your supervisor or team leader. (Note: the following question can be deleted: How does he/she react when you propose something new or unexpected?) How does your supervisor or team leader support you to be creative or innovative? (If applicable) Can you please describe an example? How does he or she inhibit you from being creative or innovative? (If applicable) Can you please describe an example?

3.3: Have you experienced any culturally related misunderstandings or challenges in your workplace (e.g., with your supervisor, your coworkers or clients)? If so, could you please give an example? Can you say how such problems might relate to your creative or innovative work?

Section 4

4.1: What do you experience as some cultural differences between you as an employee from Latin America and most Germans? If so, how do these differences look like in your workplace?

4.2: In your experience, do you find that Germans avoid uncertainty more than Latin Americans? Do they rely more on rules or bureaucracy to make things predictable? If so, how does this difference look like in your workplace?

4.3: Do you find that Germans engage more than Latin Americans in planning for the future? Or that they remain work-oriented for a longer time than Latin Americans before celebrating a success? If so, how does this difference look like in your workplace?

4.4: Do you find that in Germany, high performance and excellence at work is more important than in Latin America or that there are more rewards for improving performance in Germany? If so, how does this difference look like in your workplace?

4.5: Do you find that Latin Americans help each other more at work than Germans? Or that Latin Americans identify more strongly with their work group (that they see themselves more as a member of a group than an individual person)? If so, how does this difference look like in your workplace?

4.6: You have described a few cultural differences? Can you please say if and how these cultural differences might influence your creative or innovative work?

4.7: What advantages in terms of your professional and personal growth has being an expatriate in Germany brought to you? Has your expatriate experience made you more creative or innovative?

Appendix 2

List of codes

Categories	Sub-Categories	Codes
Culture	Performance Orientation	Higher seriousness for work Lower focus on enjoyment of life High respect for leisure time Commitment to the job
	Future Orientation	High favor for planning Stable economy and political situation Formality of plans Lack of spontaneity Well-structured time management Realistic goal setting Risk aversion
	In-Group Collectivism	Social autonomy Less actively helping others Much team work Low competition Flat hierarchies Familiar work climates
	Uncertainty Avoidance	Basic fear of unknown outcomes Many rules and procedures High level of bureaucracy
Adjustment	General Adjustment	Adjustment over time Weather leads to depression Weather changes people's mood Language difficulties hinder adjustment High quality of life Good infrastructure High safety standards
	Interaction Adjustment	Reservation of Germans Seriousness in daily activities Preference for alone time Low tolerance for changes Severity of making friends Oppressing emotions Deep friendships
	Work Adjustment	Similarities in work climate and tasks Low national cultural influences Openness of creative Impact of company size and maturity phase

		Start-ups having no culture at all Differentiation between social and work life
Creativity		Low level of supervision Support and openness from supervisors Contribution from employees demanded Trust and confidence in employees Flexible working hours facilitate creativity Social responsibility from managers Expatriate status as supportive for creativity Berlin as a booster for creative inspirations