

# Examining the Hierarchical Criteria That Influence Individuals to Become Self-Initiated Expatriate in the United States of America

Osman Yusuf

Department of Management, College of Business, Grambling State University, Grambling, USA  
Email: osmanchester@yahoo.com

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## Abstract

The application of a grading strategy in self-initiated expatriate evaluation is critical with regard to the goals and objectives. Unfortunately, researchers are not paying attention to the state of self-initiated expatriates in the process of empowering communities on the presentation of issues including prevention, adjustment, and the most critical criteria that influence them in getting jobs as well as the technical qualities that are involved. In this study, I investigate the hierarchical criteria that influence individuals to become self-initiated expatriates in the United States of America (USA). I do so by integrating meta-analytical techniques with multi-criteria decision analysis in order to find the key attribute that empowers self-initiated expatriates. Ultimately, at the time of writing this paper, the results of this kind of study were not yet available in the public domain, to the best of the research knowledge. As a result, the study makes a contribution by revealing that the “family factor” is the principal reason for self-initiated expatriation, while its effects are shown in economic, professional, lifestyle, and cultural elements. “Lifestyle factors” have no effect on other components in this study. This suggests lifestyle has no effect on self-initiated expatriation variables. Self-initiated expatriates don’t mind the US lifestyle.

## Keywords

Self-Initiated Expatriate, Professional Development, Lifestyle, DEMATEL, United States of America

## 1. Introduction

The need to provide for one’s family is a universal one, it’s human nature to

want to support oneself monetarily and having a job and making money is something that everyone wants. When an individual is said to have chosen to expatriate themselves, when they make the decision to move to another country on their own volition, without the assistance of any organizations, in order to pursue employment opportunities in a different nation they are described as Self-Initiated Expatriate (Tharenou, 2015; Hussain & Deery, 2018). In a world where economic growth and technical progress are driving forces, globalisation of business shows no indications of slowing down. As a result, it's getting simpler for companies and individuals to get job anywhere around the world. Although, the migration of people around the world can be broken down into three distinct routes, the first route involves people being assigned by government or private organization to go and work for their branches or associated partner abroad (Zhu et al., 2016). The second category involves people moving abroad voluntarily to find work (self-Initiated Expatriates). These two categories can be described as "Expatriates" whereas, the last category involves those who are compelled to leave their homelands due to circumstances beyond their control seeking refuge. Most expats come from industrialised countries, where there is parity between the sexes in terms of education and professional credentials, and where people are also highly motivated, informed, and socially adept. Most work for businesses that range in size from medium to large, holding positions like department heads, upper-level managers, and corporate executives.

Clearly, a self-initiated expatriate is someone who leaves their home country in search of work on their own initiative. Those who leave on their own accord are seen as "free" individuals who either risk leaving their home country and/or organisation for a new experience (Mahmood Aziz et al., 2021). Any worker who is hired in a host country on the basis is considered a self-initiated expatriate. It is common to practise to use the term "self-initiated expatriate" in a favourable light to people seen as assets to the community because of the positive effects they have on the locals through the dissemination of new skills (Brewster et al., 2019). Multiple studies have shown that the fundamental incentive for voluntary repatriation is a combination of unfavorable working conditions at home with the hope and anticipation of better ones overseas (Kubovcikova & van Bakel, 2022; Nolan & Liang, 2022). This has been demonstrated to be the case. In a similar spirit, the decision to actually schedule a trip to the destination country was prompted by the individual anticipation that the country would offer them improved departure conditions than their own country (Singh et al., 2022). By doing so, each country will be able to cultivate an atmosphere that is amenable to repatriation by drawing in skilled workers who have experience working abroad.

The problem that this research is willing to address lies with the fact that domesticating one's family in a foreign country is a good way to increase the likelihood that an expat will remain in that country. This research is willing to address this problem because it is a problem that is willing to be addressed. A

self-initiated expatriate is unlikely to pursue the possibility of returning home if doing so will result in a reduction in the value of their current position. Unfortunately, the degree to which individuals who have self-initiated themselves as expats determine the extent to which their faith is related with the elements that influence domestication in the local community varies. Would it be a viable option for a self-initiated expatriate to do so if it meant severing relationships with loved ones left behind in their home country? It only takes one unexpected occurrence to cause an independent expat to wonder whether or not their new life overseas is genuinely a suitable fit for their beliefs, ambitions, and aspirations; and if it isn't, it can lead to feelings of discontentment and a wish to go back home.

There are many previous empirical studies associated to expatriates; crucial to this is the work of Froese (2012). According to Froese (2012), expatriation may be due to individual factors like a lack of employment opportunities or discordant work-life balance circumstances back home that could be prompting expatriate to look for work abroad. As a whole, Stroppa and Spieß (2011) found that assigned expatriates' levels of personal initiative were positively correlated with their levels of job satisfaction, associated to their job effectiveness and occupational strain. According to Andresen et al. (2020), it mirrors findings from the Self-initiated emigrant population. Expats who take the initiative to succeed are more likely to do so than their less proactive coworkers because they are more likely to have access to more resources. Mentors, local knowledge, networks, employment, backup plans, emotional well-being, and the support of local friends are just some of the resources available to the self-initiated expat. Female self-starter expats were the focus of a study by Haak-Saheem et al. (2022). Results showed that the employment opportunities available to women can vary greatly from one country to the next and from being married to being single. A woman's career is more likely to be shaped by her life stage and chance than by her deliberate choices. Independent Japanese workers in India are studied by Ashta and Stokes (2022). The results show conclusive evidence of a previously unrecognised interplay between common Indo-Japanese spirituals. Self-initiated expatriates from Japan are developing a set of values based on Buddhism. The research showed that women's professional paths vary by region, marital status, age, and other factors. In their research, Despotovic et al. (2022) analyse what drives people to go abroad on their own initiative. Independent emigrants have varied motivations for remaining in their host countries, as shown by the study's findings. The study uses the framework of self-determination theory to distinguish between expatriates who go abroad on their own initiative in the hopes of advancing their careers and those who end up being more focused on their jobs than on their time abroad. In order to make effective hiring and firing decisions, businesses must have a thorough understanding of (evolving) motivations.

Understanding the key differences between self-initiated expats and others is a key goal of this research. The truth can be seen by remembering that free-lance

Expats choose to move to a new country depending on their own preferences and priorities. Therefore, he will only have himself to blame in the event of a failure. Those who choose to live abroad on their own may do so for a brief visit or for an extended period of time, and they may move to a foreign country more than once. Because of this, they are able to take advantage of worldwide travel to further their careers. They are not bound to a specific length of time spent abroad and will take the chance to move to a different country if presented with it.

The remaining part of the paper apart from this current section is as follows: section 2 discusses the related work associated to this study, whereas section 3 presents the conceptualization of variables and the evaluation criteria of the study. Section 4 discusses DEMATEL evaluation tasks and the analytical techniques while section 5 is the presentation of the result and analysis, and finally section 6 presents the conclusion and recommendation of the study.

## 2. Related Work

There have been quite several more studies done that have already demonstrated that the primary reason for self-initiated repatriation is characterised by a mix of factors that are associated with low or substandard working conditions in the home country or high demand of services that are needed outside of one's own country (Bjerregaard, 2022; Ramalu & Malik, 2022; Lugar et al., 2022). The vast majority of other research concentrates their attention on the factors that must be satisfied for the self-initiated repatriation to be a complete and resounding success (Jiang et al., 2022; Zakaria & Yusuf, 2022; Osman et al., 2022). Koveshnikov et al. (2022) looked at how the psychological contract fulfilment of the host employer affected political competence and international cooperation. Self-initiated expatriates go through a period of cultural adaptation. Minor statistical significance was found between the two variables when taking sole interactional adjustment into account, indicating that self-initiated expatriates' political competence is positively related to their work-related adjustment. It also discovers that the link between political competence and occupational adjustment is influenced by expatriates' ability to keep the mental agreements they make with themselves before leaving. In terms of statistical significance, the link between political competence and psychological contracts is weak.

Adjustment to a new culture and personal drive are two factors Hussain and Zhang (2022) examine in their study associated to independent expatriates. Innovation, optimal levels of work, social, and psychological well-being were linked to more creative problem solving, or thinking outside the box, at work when self-initiated expatriates target a job. The degree to which an employee feels they have the freedom to make decisions and contribute creatively to the workplace is positively correlated with their level of autonomy motivation. The study found that Employees' levels of control motivation are inversely related to their creativity. While self-directed inspiration mitigated the results of labour and when it

comes to the creative actions taken on their own accord, expatriates tend to be more moderately affected by the effects of uncontrolled motivation. [Stoermer et al. \(2018\)](#) claim that talking to people from the home country is not crucial to their study. Since adjusting is not only personal, but also complex and encompassing many different factors. [Fu et al. \(2017\)](#) highlight the importance of building relationships with fellow expats for both practical and psychological reasons. In addition, fellow expats can be a wealth of knowledge regarding the host country's customs and laws ([Asif et al., 2020](#)).

Work adjustment may be hampered if the host country and the home country share many cultural traits, argue [Selmer and Lauring \(2011\)](#). They say this is because a new expat may wrongly assume that certain cultural practises are the same as back home. The research of [Halim et al. \(2018\)](#) suggests that expats who have previously worked in other countries have an easier time settling into their new jobs abroad. According to the results of their survey of foreign academics working in Malaysia, those who had previously worked or lived abroad had a much easier time adjusting to life in Malaysia. In addition, they note that expats can broaden their horizons by experiencing life in a different culture, which can help them adapt more easily to new environments once they return home. In his research on expat academics in Saudi Arabia, [Alshammari \(2012\)](#) found no correlation between prior international experience and work adaptation. He suggests that this may be due to the difficulty of adjusting to a new culture, but notes that 81% of the academics in his study spoke Arabic, which may have also played a role. Having a firm grasp of the language helps immensely with settling in. Expats who marry locals have an easier time settling into their new home, according to research by [Danisman \(2017\)](#).

Despite its large expatriate population, [Asif et al. \(2020\)](#) note that speaking Arabic appears to be an important factor for self-initiated expatriates in Saudi Arabia. One possible explanation is that Saudi culture is very exclusive. Adjustment is highly contextual, as evidenced by the fact that learning the local language as a means of acclimating to a new place depends on where the expats are living. When looking into the employment relationships and their implications among self-initiated expatriates, [Wechtler et al. \(2022\)](#) find four main trends. This discussion centres on the experiences of business travellers, young professionals, people in transition, and those who are completely dependent on others while on the road. According to [Danisman \(2017\)](#), there is a correlation between learning the language of the host country and adjusting successfully to the local labour market. According to the author, the ability to communicate in one's native tongue can help expatriate academics succeed in the workplace and further their careers when they return home. [Merchant et al. \(2022\)](#) conducted a multi-dimensional analysis of the subjective well-being of Nigerian self-initiated expats in Germany. The results indicate that "soft" factors are significant in enhancing the sense of well-being in the context of international assignments.

It was also suggested by [Richardson and Wong \(2018\)](#) that the native language

of the host country plays an important role. Scholars in Malaysia report that knowing the local language can help with both work and general adjustment, based on their study of expats. Learning the language has no bearing on an expat's ability to settle into life in Malaysia, according to research by [Halim et al. \(2018\)](#). They hypothesise that this is the case because so many people in Malaysia are fluent in the language. According to [Danisman \(2017\)](#), an expat's ability to adjust at work may depend on how well their loved ones back home are doing. And she goes on to academics who went abroad on their own initiative and brought their families with them reported a higher level of satisfaction with life in the host country. [Selmer and Lauring \(2011\)](#) back up the idea that family plays a significant role in the adjusting process. They found that married professors who brought their families to work with them saw greater success and productivity. The reality is that many expatriates go abroad on their own initiative. Considering that they choose to study abroad on their own accord, it's likely that they worked together to make plans for their trip, which could make the transition easier.

In Saudi Arabia, [Alshahrani \(2022\)](#) looked into the company's assigned and self-initiated expatriate characteristics. According to the research, the "push factor" is the most reliable indicator of whether an expat moved abroad voluntarily or was required to do so by their employer. Findings suggest that self-initiated expats are more heavily influenced by push factors than their company-assigned counterparts. However, none of the pull-out motivational elements had any appreciable effect on either self-initiated or company-assigned expatriates. Personal and professional circumstances matter more than an expat's motives for moving abroad (voluntarily or involuntarily). The primary dividing line between the two groups of expats can be found in their respective professional goals. [Stoermer et al. \(2018\)](#) suggest that a key factor in the success of self-initiated expatriates is their perception of a high degree of cultural similarity with the host country. In countries with a single dominant culture, this is of paramount importance. Personal characteristics like open-mindedness, both in and out of the workplace, can have an effect on productivity. Additionally, positive character traits, such as adaptability and an optimistic outlook on the new culture, can prove useful. This could be a first step toward adjusting to your new workplace.

### **3. Conceptualization Variables and Evaluation Criteria**

This study conceptualized five main variables as the motives of self-initiated expatriates, namely: ("Economic", "Professional development", "Lifestyle", "Culture" and "Family" ([Podrug et al., 2014](#)). The self-initiated expatriates used for this study are those people who have lived and worked in the United States for an extended period of time. This study considers them as self-initiated expatriate experts because the analysis that the current study is willing to do requires that an expert be the data source. Therefore, self-initiated expatriates that travel to the United States on their own, where they are able to find work and where they

are currently employed, are the target respondents. As a consequence of this, five primary variables that this study is conceptualising are appraised in order to ascertain the ones with the highest cause and the ones with the highest effect. After analysis, the variables that are the most important requirements for the self-initiated expatriate in the United States will evolve. As a result, the five variables included in the study were all included, and an empirical analysis was performed on them in order to discover which factors are the most significant parameters linked with self-initiated expatriate. In order to uncover the important characteristics that enable self-initiated expatriates, the research utilised an analysis that involved integrating meta-analytical methodologies with multi-criteria decision analysis. [Citation needed] [Citation needed] In order to carry out an analysis that will evaluate the self-initiated expatriated most causative and effect criteria (cause and effect criteria), a Decision Making Trial and Evaluation Laboratory (DEMATEL) has been chosen. This analysis will be carried out using the conceptualised criteria that have been adopted by Podrug et al. (2014). DEMATEL is an efficient instrument for determining the components of a complicated system that are linked in a cause-and-effect chain (Du & Li, 2021).

The expert has it all when it comes to self-initiated expatriate's issues, however, the decision makers on the management implication with the self-initiated expatriates are held tied with the services presentation along with other issues. If both the self-initiated expatriate's issues and other related services are to be presented in an order what will be the implication to the management? This study ensures that the variables used for evaluation are credible indicators that will truly reflect the state of self-initiated expatriates, and will show its impact as well as the services of managing the self-initiated expatriates in general. The following are the operational definitions of the indicators adopted from Podrug et al. (2014) and use as the measures for the evaluations:

**1) Economic Factors (EF):** The economic factor is conceived of as a reflection of the status of both the home country and the host country of self-initiated expatriates in terms of their respective economic situations. In other words, it can be operationally defined as the level of the economy of the country an individual is willing to go to work for in order to support his or her home country. In addition, it is questioned as to whether it is the primary cause or effect of people moving abroad on their own initiative. The majority of expatriates have stated that the economic downturn, the high unemployment rate, and personal hardships back home were the driving forces behind their decision to leave their homelands (Alshahrani, 2022). Some studies have found that self-initiated expats aren't primarily motivated by economic factors because they're willing to move to another country even for lower wages, while others have found that they are primarily motivated by economic factors because they're willing to move to another country to get higher wages. In contrast, self-initiated expats are prepared to relocate to a new nation for any reason, including the opportunity to find gainful employment. This motivation varies in significance from person to per-

son and country to country (Suutari & Brewster, 2000). Economic factors, such as the expatriates' aspirations to see more of the world, make more money, broaden their horizons, and advance in their careers, were discovered to be the primary drivers behind their decision to accept a position in a foreign country. This study was conceived with the intention of analyzing and testing the level to which economic factors play a role in determining whether or not they are the primary cause of self-initiated expatriates. This is in light of the fact that economic factors are important but do not really reflecting whether or not they are the primary cause of self-initiated expatriates.

**2) Professional Development (PD):** It is generally accepted that an individual's level of professional development should reflect the status of the potential for that individual to improve their level of professional service after moving from their home country to the host country. That is how self-initiated expatriates perceive situations in which it is obvious that there will be an improvement in the quality of professional service as compared to remaining in their home country. The level of the potential for improvement in one's professional development can be operationally defined as this variable. To better one's position in one's home country, a person might be willing to seek employment in a location other than their country of origin. In addition, it is unclear whether Professional Development is the primary cause or effect of people moving abroad on their own initiative. This is a topic that is currently the subject of much debate. Self-initiated expatriates, who have greater leeway in their decisions, were shown to place a premium on seeking personal challenge and accepting international assignments based on their geographic locations homelands (Alshahrani, 2022). Motive, career advancement, skill acquisition, and international experience are all examples of factors associated with professional growth (Chwialkowska, 2020). Many people who decide to move abroad on their own do so to pursue better professional opportunities. The modern concept of a "boundary less career" encourages individuals to gain experience and abilities that are applicable across cultural and national boundaries. Expats who move overseas on their own volition are more likely to take advantage of professional advancement opportunities in their host countries, according to research by Halim et al. (2018).

It was found that the key motivation for accepting a post abroad was the desire for professional development, such as the expats' hopes for an increase in the quality of career services that would allow them to increase their income, travel more widely, and advance in their chosen fields. The purpose of this study is to investigate whether or not individuals' pursuit of further Professional Development is the key motivating factor in their decision to pursue an abroad assignment on their own initiative. This is because, while Professional Development certainly plays a role, it is unclear whether or not they are the primary motivation for those who choose to leave their home countries on their own.

**3) Lifestyle (LL):** The lifestyle of an individual self-initiated expatriate is envisaged as the reflection of the status for which will cause him/her to go to



abroad in search of a job. That is, someone might be encouraged to look for work in the host country if he or she felt the culture was a good fit for his or her own. It's essential that expatriates make the move abroad on their own accord, both for professional and personal reasons. The term "lifestyle" was operationally defined in this study as the extent to which an individual was able to continue their usual way of life while living in a foreign country. Perhaps a person who is considering working abroad is concerned about whether or not the culture and way of life will be a good fit. In addition, it is questioned as to whether lifestyle is the primary cause or effect of people migrating overseas on their own initiative. Earlier studies of what motivates people to go abroad revealed that "organisation recognition" and "the sense of vocation" were crucial (Alshahrani, 2022). A person's desire to travel abroad may be inspired by their perception of significant cultural or societal contrasts between their own nation and the place they are considering moving to. The favourable weather and advanced infrastructure of their destination country are usually the deciding factors. Independent emigrants are likely to select a destination based on its many positive qualities (Zakaria & Yusuf, 2022).

Lifestyle factors include the expat's objectives and how they might mesh with the local culture. Since this is a crucial issue that may be the primary drivers behind the decision to accept a position in a foreign country. The study's overarching goal was to analyse and test the extent to which lifestyle characteristics play a role in determining whether or not it is the primary reason of expats who move abroad on their own accord. This is due to the fact that it is not often obvious that lifestyle reasons are the driving force behind a person's decision to voluntarily relocate abroad, despite the fact that they undoubtedly play a part.

**4) Cultural Factors (CF):** The cultural element is envisioned as a reflection of the cultural situations in both the home country and the host country of expats who move abroad on their own volition. To put it another way, it may be operationally defined as the extent to which an individual is willing to adapt to the culture of the country where they will be working to provide for their home country. Whether cultural factors are the primary cause or consequence of people travelling overseas on their own initiative is also debatable. Many people leave their own nation for the simple reason that they want to broaden their horizons by travelling to other countries and seeing different cultures firsthand. Learning about other cultures is a major motivator for taking overseas projects. Expats who move abroad on their own initiative often look for communities that share cultural traits with their own (Shenkar, 2001). One of the main motivating forces for people to leave their home country is cultural differences. The social and cultural causes that people cite as motivating them to leave their home country are reflected here. Similar to Cerdin's hypothesised component relating to the geographic host site of an assignment, Carr et al. (2005) propose that a cultural motivational factor functions as a pull factor that attracts individuals to a given

host area (2013). In order to provide good services, it is important to take cultural variables into account and either adapt to the client's culture or inculcate their values. Many books and articles have been written about how expatriates deal with culture shock (Danisman, 2017; Halim et al., 2018; Zakaria & Yusuf, 2022; Nolan & Liang, 2022). An important conclusion is that women who go abroad on their own tend to adapt better to their new environment than men. In line with prior studies, this one found that cultural characteristics have a role in deciding whether or not this is the primary reason of self-initiated emigration. This is because, to the best of our knowledge, past studies have failed to adequately represent whether or not cultural variables are the primary cause of self-initiated emigration.

**5) FamilyFactors (FF):** According to the research of Danisman (2017), an expat's ability to adjust to their new work environment may depend on the satisfaction of his or her family and spouse. People are thought of in relation to their families. Specifically, this section will focus on the family structure systems of both the home country and the host nation of expats who made the move abroad on their own volition. In other words, family factors can be operationally defined as one's willingness to accept the family structural system of the host country and one's home country's level of family structure. For this reason, it is debatable whether or not the desire to be closer to one's family is the driving force behind people's independent decisions to relocate abroad. According to Cerdin (2013), the desire to leave behind one's family and its culture as well as one's own personal challenges at home is associated to those who migrate overseas on their own initiative without consulting their families before leaving. Family, according to these authors, is an essential component in this choice since it has the power to either stimulate or discourage self-initiated exploration and experimentation. This kind of creativity requires a lot of effort. As a consequence of this, a significant number of researchers are concentrating their attention on families that relocate voluntarily to another country (Nolan & Liang, 2022).

It has been discovered that one of the difficulties of relocating away from one's family to adapt to a new way of life while surrounded by people one has never encountered before is a lack of fluency in the local language of the host country (Danisman, 2017). Therefore, the purpose of this study is to inquire whether or not the fundamental motives behind self-initiated expatriate is associated with their decision to accept the family structure of the foreign country. This research set out to examine the extent to which ties to family serve as a key reason of self-initiated expats, and whether or not this is the case. This is because, while family considerations are certainly a contributing element, it is unclear whether or not they are the fundamental impetus for self-initiated emigration.

#### **4. DEMATEL Evaluation Tasks and Analytical Techniques**

There are several methods for evaluating cause and effect. The concern is to link

the dataset that will result from the evaluation tasks by the evaluation criteria and the analysis of the dataset obtained. Generally, for evaluation of cause and effect, the tasks are related to extraction, clustered and categorize useful pattern for the “cause” and “effect”. However, most of the evaluation criteria are within a presentation layer of a self-initiated expatriate.

With regard to the choice of an expatriate made by the [Chen and Tzeng \(2004\)](#) combine the grey relation model of grey system with fuzzy multiple criteria decision making in order to examine an optimal selection of the host country for expatriates. Their goal is to gain an understanding of how evaluators choose an expatriate host country. One year later, [Chen et al. \(2005\)](#) proceed with the approach of selection process from the viewpoint of the human resource managers and applies personal factors using fuzzy multiple criteria decision making. This was done in accordance with the selection process from the viewpoint of the human resource managers. The research report was successful in determining the relative importance of the most important requirements for expatriate postings. An expatriate assignment was utilised as the test values in [Eskandari and Rabelo's \(2007\)](#) study, which uses a stochastic approach to determine how uncertainty is handled in the analytic hierarchy process. In this study, the test values were taken from the real world. Furthermore, [Božanic et al. \(2015\)](#) provides the modification of the analytic hierarchy process approach, which takes into account the degree of suspense of the decision maker. This means that it allows that decision maker to have a specific degree of certainty in their conclusion. [Lai and Yang \(2017\)](#) used a model called an analytic hierarchy process (AHP) to study the most important elements that impede cross-cultural relationships between expatriates and the country in which they are living as a host. According to the findings of the study, the most significant element that stands in the way of cross-cultural contacts between expatriates and their host country is the presence of national culture bonded obstacles.

According to the findings of [Huang et al. \(2011\)](#), there are challenges involved in the process of selecting expatriate managers, particularly when the evaluation criteria are interdependent with one another. As a consequence of this, it was concluded that the method utilised by the Choice Making Trial and Evaluation Laboratory (DEMATEL) for organising the decision problem may be the most effective. An improved criterion for evaluating the performance of expatriate assignments was presented by [Huang et al. \(2011\)](#). In order to choose the individual who would be the best fit for the position, a method called DEMATEL (Decision Making Trial and Evaluation Laboratory) was utilised.

In evaluation stage, data is extracted via participant ranking of the influence or lack thereof of the criterion on their own experiences via multiple-choice questionnaires. Participants will have more leeway in making their decisions due to the inclusion of multiple choice alternatives. Therefore, the extracted criteria will be mapped in order to establish the basis and relevance of the evaluation criteria, and to gain knowledge of the interrelationships among them. In order to deter-

mine the connection between cause and effect, this subcategory of DEMATEL employs the establishment and identification of interrelationships among assessment criteria (Bhuiyan et al., 2022). Consequently, this technique is employed to set up the connections between the assessment indications. The technique determines how different criteria influence one another by ranking the types and strengths of the interactions between them; the criteria with the highest ranking are given precedence as the cause criterion, while the criteria that are not ranked higher are assumed to be the affected criterion (Asadi et al., 2022). The technique is used in the following steps:

**Step 1. Designing the strategies for obtaining expert's opinion:** This research utilize questioner developed from the five criteria adopted from Podrug et al. (2014) which include multiple choice options on the bases of Likert-scale of inter scores as follows: 0 = "No Influence", 1 = "Low Influence", 2 = "Medium Influence", 3 = "Extreme Influence", and 4 = "High Influence". Ten participants are selected for this study based on DEMATEL guidelines. It was requested of each participant that they rank the criteria according to the items that comprised each criterion, which was intended to empower self-initiated expatriate. The significance of the participants' perceptions of the influence of each criterion is therefore represented by  $x_{ij}$ , where  $i$  and  $j$  result into the cause and effect criteria respectively. Thus each participant's response is obtained as  $n = 1, 2, 3, \dots, n$  and an  $n \times n$  non-negative direct relation matrix is formed by Equation (1):

$$x^y = [x_{ij}^y]_{n \times n} \quad (1)$$

where  $y$  is the number of participation of each participant with  $1 \leq y \leq q$  this generate matrix  $q$  for  $x^1, x^2, \dots, x^q$  where  $q$  is the number of participants. The average aggregated decision matrix for all the participants  $Z = [z_{ij}]$  is presented by Equation (2):

$$Z_{ij} = \frac{1}{q} \sum_{i=1}^q x_{ij}^y \quad (2)$$

**Step 2: Normalization of the direct relation matrix:** The normalized direct relations matrix  $D$  is calculated by Equation (3):

$$D = \max \left( \max_{1 \leq i \leq n} \sum_{j=1}^n z_{ij}, \max_{1 \leq j \leq n} \sum_{i=1}^n z_{ij} \right) \quad (3)$$

where the result will be that each element in matrix  $Z$  will contain a value ranging between  $[0, 1]$ .

**Step 3: Generation of total relation matrix:** The total relation matrix  $T$  referring to the total influence generated by the participant's response is obtained when the normalized initial direct-relation matrix  $D$  is taken to the power of  $m$ , where  $m$  is indirect influence  $D^m$ , this will reflect the effect of the length of  $m$  as well as its extends in the relation matrix, thus the total relation is the sum of  $D + D^2 + \dots + D^\infty$  hence  $D^m$ , will converge to zero matrix, then the total relation matrix  $T = D + D^2 + \dots + D^\infty$  is

$$T = \lim_{m \rightarrow \infty} (D + D^2 + D^3 + \dots + D^m) = D(I - D)^{-1} \quad \text{thus}$$

$$T = D(I - D)^{-1} \quad (4)$$

where  $I$  is an  $n \times n$  identity matrix.

**Step 4: Generating the rows and columns of matrix:** The rows and columns matrix vectors of the total relation matrix. If the sum of rows and the sum of columns of matrix  $T$  are represented by vectors  $r$  and  $c$ , where

$$r = [r_i]_{n \times 1} = \left[ \sum_{j=1}^n t_{ij} \right]_{n \times 1} \quad (5)$$

$$c = [c_j]_{1 \times n} = \left[ \sum_{i=1}^n t_{ij} \right]_{1 \times n} \quad (6)$$

Then the sum of  $r_i$  and  $c_j$  will represent the effects of criteria  $i$  on  $j$  and if  $j = i$  then the sum will show shows the total effects given and received by criteria  $i$  whereas the difference shows the net effect by criteria  $i$  contributes to the system. However, when it is positive, criteria  $i$  is a net cause, whereas when is negative, criteria  $i$  is a net effect. Hence,  $r + c$  is called the “Prominence” and  $r - c$  is called the “Relation” if  $r_j - c_j$  is positive, then, the criteria has an overall impact on the other criteria, and it can be categorized under the cause group, whereas, if  $r_j - c_j$  is negative, if this is the case, the criteria in question are being swayed by the other criteria as a whole and should be categorized as the “effect”.

The “Prominence” and  $r_i - c_j$  is called the “Relation”.

**Step 5: Set a threshold value ( $\alpha$ ) to generate an interaction diagram.** This is a cutoff point calculated by Equation (7).

$$\alpha = \sum_{i=1}^n \sum_{j=1}^n t_{ij} / N \quad (7)$$

where  $N$  is the total number of matrix elements that will be produced using the average of the matrix  $T$ 's members to extract any negligible effects. This indicates that the impact relationships will not include any impacts that are less than the threshold value.

**Step 6: Construct the relationship diagram for the cause and effect:** The outcome of the calculations performed in the earlier steps serves as the basis for the drawing of the relationship diagram. Therefore, the cause and effect are mapped out to all coordinate sets of the sum of the rows and columns. These rows and columns represent the interactions among the criteria and provide information that allows one to determine which criteria are the most essential and how they influence others.

## 5. Result and Analysis

The interpretation of the experimental findings focuses on both explanatory and exploratory aspects. The data from the exploratory study are gathered and processed so that the explanatory findings, which either affirm or validate the research outcome, can be put into context. The exploratory findings typically involve a descriptive analysis of the expert's descriptions of their level of satisfaction with their jobs, the economic factors that influence their stay, their Professional Development, their lifestyle, and the cultural and family issues associated

with self-initiated expatriation. The explanatory method focuses on the DEMATEL evaluation in order to establish the hierarchical criteria that motivate people to go to the United States of America on their own initiative.

### **5.1. The Finding on the Impact of Self-Initiated Expatriation**

Everyone who took part in the survey is an individual who moved abroad on their own initiative in order to find work in their field of expertise, or who initially moved abroad in order to pursue education or other activities, and then went on to find employment. It's possible that they came to the conclusion that, despite their high level of education and the wealth of experience they've gained in the workforce, their home countries might not be able to provide them with a job, or that the job abroad might pay significantly more than the job in their home country. If this was the case, it would explain why so many people decide to leave their home countries and seek employment elsewhere. In a similar vein, their abilities make it difficult for them to find work that is commensurate with their qualifications and pays more in the host country. This is because there is less demand for people with their qualifications (Chwialkowska, 2020). As a direct consequence of this, skilled labour is the primary sector of employment for each and every respondent. Podrug et al. (2014) outline five factors of why people choose to move abroad on their own initiative to become self-initiated expatriate, which this current research adopted.

In terms of the economic factors, the majority of those who responded have been working in the host country (the United States) for more than ten years and are very happy with their jobs, with the exception of one person who is neutral about their work situation. This lends credence to the notion that the issue of job satisfaction as well as their level of comfort within their jobs is satisfactory. Everyone who took the survey agrees that their ability to find job is influenced by the economic growth associated with the host country's ability to transform itself; more specifically, everyone agrees that economic growth in the United States of America where they live is a factor. To put it another way, it's a measure of how much an increase in employment and labour force participation has added up to.

The statement that the economy of the United States of America has an effect on the respondent's capacity to obtain job is supported by all of the opinions expressed in the survey. To be more explicit, the respondents are of the opinion that the state of the economy in the United States of America in comparison to the rest of the globe is related to the likelihood of them getting employment. All of the respondents are of the opinion that in order for the economy of the United States to improve, they require their service. To be more specific, the United States economy has a highly developed and technologically advanced services sector, which accounts for its biggest output. The respondents believe that this is connected with their prospects of getting jobs in the United States economy. The notion that the economy of the United States is the only factor influencing the

job decisions of its residents is rejected by every single person who participated in the survey. That is why the economy of the United States needs the services of people who have moved there from elsewhere. To be more specific, the economy of the United States is greatly dependent on whoever is the best, regardless of where they come from in the world.

The unpredictability of the international economy has an impact on employment decisions made by self-directed expatriates in the United States. 36.4% of respondents said that the uncertainty surrounding the global economy has a significant impact on the employment prospects of self-initiated expatriates in the United States. However, 27.3% of respondents indicated that the unpredictability of the international economy has a significant impact on the employment of self-initiated expatriates in the United States. In conclusion, 36.4% of respondents stated that the unpredictability of the global economy has a medium influence on the employment prospects of self-initiated expatriates in the United States. This discovery can be attributed to the growing uncertainty regarding the current COVID-19 pandemic recovery's economic and social developments. This is an indisputable characteristic of globalisation in the economies of the world. The degree to which self-initiated expatriates are impacted by rising uncertainty is filtered by historically developed institutional settings and institutional settings that are specific to the country in question. In addition, job insecurity is associated with an increased likelihood of delaying the formation of partnerships or forgoing them altogether. Expats who move abroad on their own volition also cultivate rational responses, which can be spotted in the form of a variety of different behavioural strategies.

In terms of the factors related to professional development (career). It was established that employment opportunities in the United States are heavily influenced by the level of one's skills. That doesn't just refer to opportunities for higher-paying white-collar jobs, though; it also encompasses the skills necessary to carry out the duties of a given position. This is different from the term that economists typically refer to it as, which is "skilled labour." Skilled labour is work that requires a certain amount of training or skills, which can be obtained through education and skills policies, which are more effective when they are well coordinated with employment. The ability to excel at a particular sport can be correlated with other skills that are valuable to employers in the United States. Employers in the United States stand to benefit from self-initiated expatriates because they possess a qualification that is straightforward to assess in the United States. Because of this, the vast majority of respondents are of the opinion that the strengths of an individual's skills have an impact on employment opportunities in the United States.

It is possible for a person's high level of skilled abilities as well as their work ethic to play a role in determining whether or not they will be able to find employment in the United States. This conclusion is drawn from my own assessment of how well I performed. That is to say, a self-initiated expatriate is some-

one who makes the effort to evaluate themselves first and build up their confidence to the point where they believe the task for which they originally set out can be successfully completed. Everyone who took part in the survey was in agreement that a person's high-level skills as well as their work ethic are important factors to consider when determining whether or not they will work in the United States. Another interesting development is that the respondent acknowledges that their prior work experience has played a role in shaping their desire to work in the United States. This suggests that having prior experience is an absolutely necessary component of being a self-initiated expatriate. The respondents are in agreement that the level of education they have plays a role in whether or not they are interested in working in the United States. This suggests that having a certain level of education plays a significant role in the process of becoming a self-initiated expatriate.

In terms of the finding associated with factors related to the lifestyle, it was gathered that the respondents are also in agreement that including a professional certification on their resume demonstrates that they have the expertise necessary to perform at a higher level than those who do not have it. This indicates that their professional certifications have some bearing on whether or not they are interested in working in the United States. In order to obtain professional certification, the majority of professionals are required to pay a fee, meet certain requirements, and pass an examination or assessment of some kind. Even though it is not a primary requirement for the position, many employment recruiters believe that candidates for jobs gain an advantage if they have some kind of professional certification. There are a lot of jobs like these in the skilled area of jobs in the United States.

The respondent's lifestyle, which includes consuming meals that are well-balanced in the United States, is an important factor in job hunting. That is to say, if a self-initiated expat rite believes that it is within their means to consume meals that are well-balanced, then this will most definitely influence their work. In addition, the respondents are of the opinion that the way they live in the United States enables them to maintain a healthy level of physical fitness regardless of the schedule that they keep. In addition, the respondent acknowledges that the way they live in the United States enables them to keep a healthy lifestyle and perform their job duties in an appropriate manner. It was also discovered that the respondents are able to pursue interests in addition to working because of the American way of life. They also confirmed that the earnings are sufficient to cover the costs of staying in the United States for the duration of their trip.

The responders have considered the cultural aspects at play and agree with the statement that they must have access to cultural training and advice in order to make the most of their time in the United States. Therefore, it is of the utmost importance for the respondent to make the most of their time in the United States in order to receive the whole cultural training and counselling that is re-



quired for transitioning to the working environment in the United States. The ability of an individual to adapt to a new culture is a significant factor in determining whether or not they will require social help in the country that is hosting them, according to the respondents. That is a person's level of success in assimilating into the culture of their new community in the United States is the determining factor in whether or not they will require social services. The demand for social assistance in the United States will determine whether or not the self-initiated effort of expatriates will be successful.

They also saw it as a truth that the stresses at work were influenced by the process of cross-cultural adjustment, which is an essential instrument for the success of self-initiated expatriation. In addition, the respondent believes that the process of transitioning to a new culture can have an effect on the respondent's engagement in the workforce in the United States. Last but not least, the respondents are in agreement that an ability to adapt across cultural boundaries is a factor that must be considered in order to get the most out of their performance at work.

In terms of family factors associated to self-initiated expatriate, the responders are in agreement with the statement that continuing to live in the United States has an effect on the hierarchical structure of my family. Because the laws of the United States have to apply to the power structure of the family in the sense that some of the rights that absolutely have to be granted should absolutely have to be given, even though these rights might not necessarily be the same in their original country. The responders are in agreement with the statement that the family structure of the United States of America has an effect on the structure of their own family. They ought to be required to assimilate to the family structure of the United States. The respondent's family structure has an impact on how the rules of relationships alter when they are living in the United States as a result of the stress caused by their surroundings and their development. They are also of the opinion that the way families are structured in the United States has an effect on the emotional connections that exist between members of my own family. In conclusion, the level of detachment from or connection with one's family that a respondent experience while living in the host country is impacted by the family's ability to acclimatize to the new environment.

## **5.2. Analysis of the Key Criteria That Influence Self-Initiated Expatriation**

The analysis of the key criteria that influence Self-Initiated Expatriation has been carried out by the DEMATEL approach. After the data collection, the first step in obtaining the analysis result involves coding the criteria and entering the data in MS Excel sheet. The criteria were coded as follows: "Economic Factors (EF)", "Professional Development (PD)", "Lifestyle (LL)", "Cultural Factors (CF)", and "Family Factors (FF)". Hence the ten individuals that provided their opinions for this study (in-terms of integer score of 0, 1, 2, 3 and 4) are gathered and pre-

sented in the initial individual matrix describe as the participant’s response obtained and presented in an  $n \times n$  non-negative direct relation matrix using Equation (1):

$$\begin{aligned}
 x^1 &= \begin{pmatrix} 0 & 3 & 3 & 3 & 3 \\ 3 & 0 & 4 & 4 & 4 \\ 3 & 4 & 0 & 4 & 4 \\ 3 & 4 & 3 & 0 & 3 \\ 3 & 4 & 3 & 3 & 0 \end{pmatrix}, x^2 = \begin{pmatrix} 0 & 3 & 3 & 3 & 3 \\ 3 & 0 & 3 & 3 & 3 \\ 3 & 3 & 0 & 3 & 3 \\ 3 & 3 & 3 & 0 & 4 \\ 3 & 3 & 3 & 4 & 0 \end{pmatrix}, x^3 = \begin{pmatrix} 0 & 3 & 3 & 3 & 3 \\ 3 & 0 & 3 & 3 & 3 \\ 3 & 3 & 0 & 2 & 2 \\ 3 & 3 & 2 & 0 & 3 \\ 3 & 3 & 3 & 3 & 0 \end{pmatrix} \\
 x^4 &= \begin{pmatrix} 0 & 3 & 3 & 3 & 3 \\ 3 & 0 & 3 & 3 & 3 \\ 3 & 3 & 0 & 3 & 3 \\ 3 & 3 & 3 & 0 & 3 \\ 3 & 3 & 3 & 3 & 0 \end{pmatrix}, x^5 = \begin{pmatrix} 0 & 2 & 2 & 2 & 2 \\ 2 & 0 & 2 & 2 & 2 \\ 2 & 2 & 0 & 2 & 2 \\ 2 & 2 & 2 & 0 & 2 \\ 2 & 2 & 2 & 2 & 0 \end{pmatrix}, x^6 = \begin{pmatrix} 0 & 2 & 2 & 2 & 2 \\ 2 & 0 & 2 & 2 & 2 \\ 2 & 2 & 0 & 2 & 2 \\ 2 & 2 & 2 & 0 & 2 \\ 2 & 2 & 2 & 2 & 0 \end{pmatrix} \\
 x^7 &= \begin{pmatrix} 0 & 2 & 2 & 2 & 1 \\ 2 & 0 & 2 & 2 & 1 \\ 2 & 2 & 0 & 2 & 1 \\ 2 & 2 & 2 & 0 & 1 \\ 2 & 2 & 2 & 2 & 0 \end{pmatrix}, x^8 = \begin{pmatrix} 0 & 4 & 3 & 4 & 3 \\ 4 & 0 & 4 & 4 & 3 \\ 3 & 3 & 0 & 4 & 3 \\ 4 & 4 & 4 & 0 & 3 \\ 3 & 3 & 3 & 3 & 0 \end{pmatrix}, x^9 = \begin{pmatrix} 0 & 4 & 3 & 4 & 4 \\ 4 & 0 & 3 & 4 & 4 \\ 3 & 3 & 0 & 3 & 3 \\ 4 & 4 & 3 & 0 & 4 \\ 4 & 4 & 3 & 4 & 0 \end{pmatrix} \\
 x^{10} &= \begin{pmatrix} 0 & 3 & 3 & 3 & 4 \\ 3 & 0 & 2 & 3 & 3 \\ 3 & 2 & 0 & 2 & 2 \\ 3 & 3 & 2 & 0 & 3 \\ 4 & 3 & 2 & 3 & 0 \end{pmatrix}
 \end{aligned}$$

The average aggregation of participant’s decision matrices also known as the direct influence matrix is computed by Equation (2) and displayed below:

$$Z = \begin{bmatrix} 0 & 2.9 & 2.7 & 2.9 & 2.8 \\ 2.9 & 0 & 2.7 & 3 & 2.8 \\ 2.7 & 2.7 & 0 & 2.7 & 2.5 \\ 2.9 & 3 & 2.6 & 0 & 2.8 \\ 2.9 & 2.9 & 2.6 & 2.9 & 2.8 \end{bmatrix}$$

Thereafter, the direct influence matrix was normalized by Equation (3) and the result is presented below:

$$D = \begin{bmatrix} 0.0000 & 0.2417 & 0.2250 & 0.2147 & 0.2333 \\ 0.2147 & 0.0000 & 0.2250 & 0.2500 & 0.2333 \\ 0.2250 & 0.2250 & 0.0000 & 0.2250 & 0.2083 \\ 0.2147 & 0.2500 & 0.2167 & 0.0000 & 0.2333 \\ 0.2147 & 0.2147 & 0.2167 & 0.2147 & 0.0000 \end{bmatrix}$$

The total relation matrix refers to the total influence generated by the participant’s response and is determined from the normalised initial direct-relation matrix using Equation (4).

$$T = \begin{bmatrix} 2.6619 & 2.8758 & 2.6915 & 2.8758 & 2.7572 \\ 2.8757 & 2.7005 & 2.7095 & 2.9005 & 2.7757 \\ 2.7092 & 2.7275 & 2.3795 & 2.7275 & 2.6091 \\ 2.8573 & 2.8823 & 2.6870 & 2.6823 & 2.7583 \\ 2.8575 & 2.8768 & 2.6868 & 2.8768 & 2.5690 \end{bmatrix}$$

In order to establish the causes and effects based on the analysis, the sums of the rows and columns of the matrix that makes up the total relation matrix, which are the rows and columns matrix vectors of the total relation matrix are calculated. These are determined using Equations (5) and (6), respectively. In other words, if the entire sum of the rows and the total sum of the columns of the total relation matrix are respectively represented by the vectors  $r$  and  $c$ , the “cause” and “effect” will be determined. Hence the result of the calculation is presented in the matrix below:

$$\begin{array}{ccccc} & & & & r_i \\ \begin{bmatrix} 2.6619 & 2.8758 & 2.6915 & 2.8758 & 2.7572 \\ 2.8757 & 2.7005 & 2.7095 & 2.9005 & 2.7757 \\ 2.7092 & 2.7275 & 2.3795 & 2.7275 & 2.6091 \\ 2.8573 & 2.8823 & 2.6870 & 2.6823 & 2.7583 \\ 2.8575 & 2.8768 & 2.6868 & 2.8768 & 2.5690 \end{bmatrix} & & & & \\ c_i & 13.9620 & 14.0631 & 13.1543 & 14.0631 & 13.4694 \end{array}$$

The final evaluation lies with establishing the relationship between the cause and the effect as described in section 4 step 4.

Therefore, only FF fell within the cause group (see **Table 1**), which indicated that it influenced other criteria, while rest fell within the effect group, which meant that they were influenced by other criteria. The next is to set a threshold value ( $\alpha$ ) from the total relation matrix in order to generate an interaction diagram. Hence the threshold value is determined by Equation (7). As a result, the calculated threshold value is found to be **2.7485**, this means any value in the total relation matrix that is greater than the threshold value has an impact in the relationships diagram, which is why they are bolded in the matrix below:

The relationship diagram is drawn in such a way that at each row of **Table 2**, a first criterion within that row is pointed to the other criteria in the direction to which the impact can link them together with an arrow pointing at those criteria

**Table 1.** Direct influenced of the criteria among themselves.

<i>Criteria</i>	$r_i$	$c_i$	$r_i + c_i$	$r_i - c_i$	
<b>EF</b>	13.862	13.9620	27.82421401	-0.09978599	effect
<b>PD</b>	13.962	14.0631	28.02509686	-0.10110314	effect
<b>LL</b>	13.153	13.1543	26.30726027	-0.00133973	effect
<b>CF</b>	13.868	14.0631	27.93074379	-0.19545621	effect
<b>FF</b>	13.867	13.4694	27.33640627	0.39760627	cause

whose values are greater than the threshold value. This is done in order to show how the impact can link them together. As a result, the diagraph that has been produced from this study is presented in **Figure 1**.

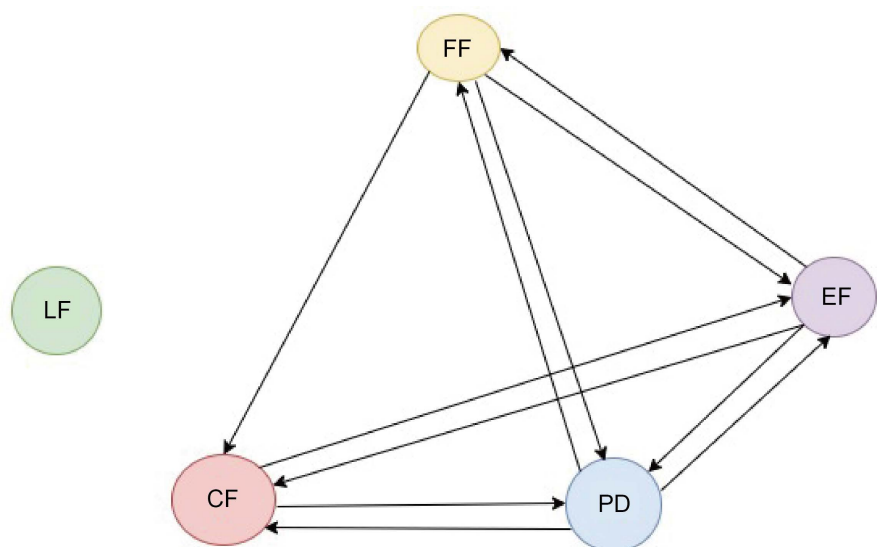
Based on the findings of this research, it has been determined that the “family factor” is the primary factor that contributes to self-initiated expatriation. On the other hand, the effects of self-initiated expatriation are seen in terms of economic factors, professional development, lifestyle factors, and cultural factors. On the other hand, the findings of this research indicate that “lifestyle variables” do not have any bearing on any of the other aspects that are relevant to this topic. This indicates that lifestyle does not have an effect on any other elements that are thought to have a relationship with the self-initiated factors of expatriation. In addition, it is essential to have a clear understanding that the way of life in the United States is not an issue for any self-initiated expatriate.

### 6. Conclusion and Recommendation

When evaluating the work of a self-directed expatriate in comparison to a set of preset criteria, it is very necessary to utilise some kind of grading system. Unfortunately, researchers are ignoring the situation of self-initiated expatriates in

**Table 2.** The values of the relationships impact.

	EF	PD	LL	CF	FF
EF	2.6619	<b>2.8758</b>	2.6915	<b>2.8758</b>	<b>2.7572</b>
PD	<b>2.8757</b>	2.7005	2.7095	<b>2.9005</b>	<b>2.7757</b>
LL	2.7092	2.7275	2.3795	2.7275	2.6091
CF	<b>2.8576</b>	<b>2.8823</b>	2.6870	2.6823	2.7583
FF	<b>2.8575</b>	<b>2.8768</b>	2.6868	<b>2.8768</b>	2.5690



**Figure 1.** The Interrelationship diagraph.

the process of empowering communities on the presentation of issues such as prevention, adjustment, and the most critical criteria that influence them in obtaining jobs, as well as the technical qualifications that are involved. This is unfortunate because the situation of self-initiated expatriates is relevant to the presentation of issues such as prevention, adjustment, and the most critical criteria that influence them in obtaining jobs. My studies in this area are concentrated on determining the variables that lead individuals to choose to independently leave their native nations and relocate to the United States of America (USA). In order to accomplish this, I use a combination of meta-analytic approaches and multi-criteria decision analysis in order to determine the quality of independent foreign workers that are most significant. In conclusion, to the best of the author's knowledge at the time this work was prepared, the findings of studies of this sort were not yet available in the public domain. This research proves that the "family factor" is the primary impetus for self-initiated relocation abroad, although economic, professional, lifestyle, and cultural considerations all draw attention to the impact of such a move. However, it has been found that the "lifestyle factors" investigated here have no effect on any of the other components investigated. This suggests that none of the other factors thought to be related to self-initiated emigration are affected by one's way of living. Also, any expat who leaves on their own will won't miss the American way of life.

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### **Conflicts of Interest**

The author declares no conflicts of interest regarding the publication of this paper.

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