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Acculturation, coping, and integration success of international skilled migrants: An integrative review and multilevel framework

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Abstract

In this article, we review the limited but growing body of research on international skilled migrants and examine to what extent knowledge generated in adjacent research streams—specifically, work on assigned and self-initiated expatriates—can be meaningfully applied to aid our understanding of the challenges, coping strategies, and acculturation dynamics of skilled migrants. We develop a framework that explains how variables and processes at multiple levels (individual, organisational, and societal) influence migrant acculturation and coping and result in integration-related outcomes in the domains of personal/family life and workplace/career. We discuss directions for future research and implications for practice.

KEYWORDS

acculturation modes, coping strategies, individual, organisational and societal influences, international skilled migrants, migrant integration success

1 | INTRODUCTION

Given the growing shortages of highly skilled labour in both advanced and emerging economies and the accelerating forces of globalisation, economists predict that the global economy will become increasingly dependent on internationally mobile professionals (United Nations, 2017; World Bank, 2015). In line with this, research on mobility has flourished over the last four decades (Kraimer, Bolino, & Mead, 2016). This research also reflects changes in how

organisations manage mobility (i.e., introducing a portfolio of assignment types such as flex or commuter assignments) and the increasing number of self-initiated expatriates (SIEs, individuals who initiate their expatriation without the help of an organisation). Both trends have brought important research topics to the fore. Despite scholarly progress in addressing emergent mobility issues, until recently, research had largely overlooked one important group—the growing number of international skilled migrants (ISMs; Binggeli, Dietz, & Krings, 2013).

ISMs have been defined as migrants with at least a bachelor's degree or equivalent who have moved to work and live abroad on an indefinite basis (Cerdin, Diné, & Brewster, 2014). Unlike assigned expatriates (AEs), whose organisations transfer them temporarily to a new country (Tharenou, 2015), ISMs self-initiate international mobility that entails higher levels of risk and unpredictability and usually involves significant life transitions (Zikic, Bonache, & Cerdin, 2010). Their intention to settle for an indefinite period of time distinguishes them from SIEs who usually repatriate within a decade (Cerdin & Selmer, 2014). As ISMs frequently originate from emerging and developing economies (United Nations, 2017), they are often treated as "second-class" employees and are disadvantaged based on their national origin (Binggeli et al., 2013; Dietz, Joshi, Esses, Hamilton, & Gabarrot, 2015). Compared with AEs and SIEs, ISMs are also perceived as having lower levels of agency (Guo & Al Ariss, 2015; Hajro, Zilinskaite, & Stahl, 2017).

Despite their growing numbers and economic importance (World Bank, 2015), until recently, human resource management (HRM) research treated this group of workers as a "forgotten minority" (Binggeli et al., 2013). Scholars have only just begun to examine the challenges ISMs face, their coping strategies, the factors that influence their acculturation, and the role of HRM practices and organisational support systems in promoting positive integration outcomes (Hajro, Zilinskaite, & Stahl, 2017; Zikic, 2015).

In light of these limitations, our focus is on reviewing existing research on ISMs and knowledge generated in adjacent literatures—particularly research on AEs and SIEs—to develop an integrative framework that illuminates how variables at multiple levels (individual, organisational, and societal) influence ISM acculturation and coping and the resulting integration-related outcomes in the workplace/career and personal/family life domains. By highlighting cross-level linkages, underlying mechanisms, and situational contingencies, we aim to bridge the micro–macro divide in the literature on ISMs.

Our article makes three noteworthy contributions. First, we go beyond previous reviews of international mobility that either focus on expatriate adjustment (Bhaskar-Shrinivas, Harrison, Shaffer, & Luk, 2005; Takeuchi, 2010) and HRM-related issues (e.g., Littrell, Salas, Hess, Paley, & Riedel, 2006) or compare different forms of global work experience through a career lens (Shaffer, Kraimer, Chen, & Bolino, 2012). Second, because research on ISMs is still nascent, we elaborate on the extent to which knowledge generated in the fields of AEs and SIEs can be meaningfully applied to aid our understanding of ISMs. We identify areas of overlap and distinction and derive future research implications. Third, we develop a unifying, multilevel framework that extends our understanding of the antecedents, coping and acculturation processes, and outcomes of ISMs. We propose new theoretical insights based on the findings emerging from our review and highlight underresearched topics within the literature on ISMs.

In the sections that follow, we first describe our method. We then provide an overview of how ISMs differ from other types of global workers in terms of six core dimensions: geographic origin and destination; time horizon; motivation and personal agency, vulnerability, status, and power; organisational support; and commonly studied outcomes (see Table 1). This is followed by an overview of the individual-, organisational-, and societal-level factors that influence ISMs' acculturation dynamics and coping efforts and subsequently their integration success. For each set of antecedent factors, we discuss: (a) existing theoretical and empirical work on ISMs and (b) what can be learned from research on other types of global workers. In the last section, we present our integrative multilevel framework as means of guiding future research and practice.

2 | METHOD

To identify as many articles as possible to include in our review, we first searched various databases (e.g., ABI-INFORM, Business Source Premier, and Google Scholar) by using the general terms migrants, qualified migrants,

TABLE 1 Differences between international skilled migrants and other types of global workers

	ISMs	SIEs	AEs
Geographic origin and destination	Typically move from developing/emerging to developed country	Typically move from developing/emerging or developed country to a more "attractive" country	Move from host-country of employer (developed nation) to subsidiary country (developed or developing/emerging)
Time horizon	Intention to stay for an indefinite period of time (sometimes permanently)	Intention is not to settle though stays may be lengthy (in excess of 10 years)	Temporary stay
Motivation and personal agency	Initiate their own mobility Agency varies from low to high	Initiate their own mobility Agency is high	Sent by organisation Agency is medium
	Motivated by a variety of factors: political, economic, societal, family, or personal reasons	Primarily motivated by career development, quality of life, or family reasons	Primarily motivated by career development objectives, financial inducements, and contributing to organisational objectives
Vulnerability, status, and power	Secure their own employment	Secure their own employment	Employment secured by organisation
	Local job contract	Local job contract	Expatriate contract (with home organisation)
	Typically, underemployed, in precarious job situations, high likelihood of discrimination	Frequently employed by multinational organisations	Jobs that enable them to make use of special skills and expertise
	Relative loss of status	Typically, no loss of status	No loss and often gain of status
Organisational support	Self-funded No organisational support Career in host-country is "domestic"	Self-funded No organisational support Career moves are self-directed	Organisation-funded Organisational support available Career moves are facilitated by the organisation
Commonly studied outcomes	Acculturation	Personal growth and career development	Adjustment and performance

Note. AEs: assigned expatriates; ISMs: international skilled migrants; SIEs: self-initiated expatriates.

skilled migrants, expatriates, AEs, and SIEs. Substantive relevance was ensured by requiring that selected articles contained at least one of these primary keywords in their title or abstract. The data used for the analysis were taken from theoretical and empirical studies published in peer-reviewed scholarly journals. As Andresen, Bergdolt, Margenfeld, and Dickmann (2014) recently conducted a review of studies on international mobility in psychological, sociological, and economics journals, we predominantly focused on journals published in the field of HRM and international management. We also included relevant and highly cited book chapters (e.g., Thomas & Lazarova, 2006), as well as recent conference papers presented at leading international conferences (e.g., Academy of Management Meeting). In order to verify our search of relevant articles, we paid especial attention to existing critical reviews of AEs and SIEs studies (e.g., Doherty, 2013; Shaffer et al., 2012; Takeuchi, 2010) and reoccurring references to the most recent articles. Finally, we refined our search terms (e.g., by using the terms adjustment, acculturation, and coping related issues). It must be noted that we were unable to include in this article all identified themes in the literature on AEs and SIEs (e.g., topics not applicable to ISM, such as repatriation-related challenges, were excluded from this review). Our aim was not to provide a comprehensive review of these literatures. Instead, our goal was to identity the extent to which knowledge generated in the field of expatriation can be meaningfully applied to ISMs and used as starting point for future research in this domain.

3 | DISTINGUISHING ISMS FROM OTHER TYPES OF GLOBAL WORKERS

Until recently, there has been a lack of consensus on the definition of "migrant" in the HRM literature. Scholars do distinguish between SIEs, AEs, and migrants, but they differ vastly with respect to their demarcation criteria (e.g., Al Ariss, 2010; Baruch, Dickmann, Altman, & Bournois, 2013). Recently, based on a review of 136 articles published from 2005 to 2010, Andresen et al. (2014) clarified the distinctions and developed a framework of different types of global workers. The authors used 17 different subcategories to distinguish between AEs, SIEs, and migrants. Although the authors acknowledged ISMs, they did not refer specifically to this type of international mobility. They use migrants as an umbrella term for people who live outside their country of origin. Building upon and extending this past research, we reviewed the existing literature on AEs, SIEs, and ISMs in the HRM and international management fields. We derived six core dimensions that distinguish ISMs from AEs and SIEs by grouping identified yet related first-order subcategories into second-order constructs. For example, our "vulnerability, status, and power" second-order construct includes several of Andresen et al.'s (2014) subcategories such as legality of employment, executing work abroad, visa status, consequences for individual, and contract partner. With one exception, our criteria match the demarcation criteria developed by Andresen et al. (2014). As we are interested in moving beyond mere categorisation of the ISM group against other groups of mobile professionals, we added the construct "commonly studied outcomes", which highlights a specific stance that the literature usually takes regarding the long-term goals, desired outcomes, and success of AEs, SIEs, and ISMs. Table 1 summarises the main criteria that differentiate the three types of international mobility.

3.1 | Geographic origin and destination

In general, migrants—including ISMs—tend to come from developing/emerging nations and flow towards more developed nations. On the other hand, research on SIEs has primarily focused on SIEs from developed nations who move to locations subjectively categorised as "attractive" to the particular individuals (Fitzgerald & Howe-Walsh, 2008; Inkson & Myers, 2003). We note, however, that the term SIE implies nothing specific about country of origin or host-country and that there is no data on what proportion of SIEs originate from developed versus developing countries (Cerdin & Selmer, 2014; Selmer & Lauring, 2012). In comparison, AEs have traditionally been posted from economically dominant countries to developing/emerging or developed countries (McNulty & Brewster, 2017).

3.2 | Time horizon

The time an individual intends to spend in the host-country is a further differentiator between ISMs and both expatriate types. ISMs intend to settle in the host-country permanently or with an indefinite time horizon (Cerdin & Selmer, 2014; Doherty, Richardson, & Thorn, 2013), whereas both AEs' and SIEs' intention of repatriation is predetermined and, hence, their time horizon is limited (Shaffer et al., 2012; Tharenou, 2015).

3.3 | Motivation and personal agency

ISMs' mobility can be motivated by a variety of push and pull factors, and ISMs may possess either high or low levels of personal agency (e.g., they can be driven by free will or may be fleeing from a war-torn country; Cerdin et al., 2014). In contrast, AEs' and SIEs' choices are driven mainly by the perceived opportunity to develop global career competencies (Doherty, Dickmann, & Mills, 2011) or monetary incentives (Richardson & McKenna, 2002). Hence, personal agency is high for SIEs (Richardson & Mallon, 2005) and medium for AEs. AEs are sent by their employers but have free choice in accepting or rejecting their assignments (Doherty et al., 2011).

3.4 | Vulnerability, status, and power

Despite possessing a tertiary degree or higher, ISMs often have a stereotyped image as low-skilled migrants and are thus perceived to hold a lower status (Hajro, Zilinskaite, & Stahl, 2017; Zikic, 2015). They are often subject to "skill discounting" (i.e., devaluation of migrants' foreign education and experience relative to those of locally trained employees; Reitz, 2002), are the first to lose their jobs in an economic downturn, are often paid less, and work in worse conditions than local workers (Cranston, 2017; Winterheller & Hirt, 2017). On the other hand, research on SIEs has typically focused on high-status individuals from developed countries (e.g., Fitzgerald & Howe-Walsh, 2008; Inkson & Myers, 2003). However, there is evidence suggesting that SIEs moving from developing to developed nations may face barriers similar to those encountered by ISMs, including discrimination and underutilisation of their skills (Al Ariss & Özbilgin, 2010; Selmer & Lauring, 2012). AEs have a positive status because they are employed based on their managerial or technical skills on expatriate contracts before their move (Cerdin & Selmer, 2014).

3.5 | Organisational support

Unlike AEs, ISMs do not have organisational support (e.g., additional financial incentives, and relocation support). The same is true for SIEs, who go abroad on their own initiative without the support of a specific organisation (Tharenou, 2015).

3.6 | Commonly studied outcomes

Finally, ISMs differ from other types of global workers in terms of their long-term goals, desired outcomes, and what "successful" integration means to them. Because in most cases, the goal of ISMs is to settle in the host-country for an indefinite period of time, their desired outcome is full integration into the host-country, with attendant changes in personal identity, values, and cultural orientations. Consequently, research on ISMs has focused predominantly on the acculturation-related outcomes of migrants (Berry, 1997; Cerdin et al., 2014; Hajro, Zilinskaite, & Stahl, 2017). In contrast, research on SIEs tends to focus on SIEs' personal growth and career development (Richardson & Zikic, 2007; Selmer & Lauring, 2012), whereas the emphasis of research on AEs has been on their adjustment[1] in the host-country (Shaffer, Harrison, Gregersen, Black, & Ferzandi, 2006; Thomas & Lazarova, 2006) and related outcomes such as intention to remain in the host-country, job attitudes, frequency and quality of interactions with host-country nationals, and performance (Bhaskar-Shrinivas et al., 2005; Shaffer et al., 2016).

4 | DEFINING MIGRATION SUCCESS: ACCULTURATION, COPING, AND INTEGRATION

In this section, we offer a broad definition of integration success and demonstrate that the extent to which an ISM can be said to have successfully integrated is largely a function of two key variables or processes: the ISM's acculturation mode and his/her personal effectiveness in coping with the challenges faced in the host-country (Berry, 1997; Lazarus, 2000). Broadly speaking, successful ISMs are those who acculturate to living and working in the host society (Berry, 2005; Hajro, Zilinskaite, & Stahl, 2017). Given the multiple changes and related stress that accompany relocation, the role of coping is critical (Lazarus, 2000).

4.1 | Acculturation

The concept of acculturation has been widely used in the migration literature to describe the process of change that occurs in the behavioural repertoire, value system, and personal identity of individuals upon migration. As this process requires adaptation to unfamiliar social and environmental conditions, it often produces intense physical and psychological stress (Berry, 2005). Crossing national boundaries is particularly stressful for ISMs, given the variety

and intricacy of changes associated with the move (e.g., leaving family members behind and mastering new social conventions). Furthermore, many of the conditions that cause acculturative stress do not disappear after a few months or years but may be present indefinitely.

Berry (1997, 2005) identified four types of strategies in which individuals engage when going through an acculturation process: assimilation (not wanting to maintain one's cultural identity and actively seeking interaction with the host culture), separation (valuing retention of one's original culture and passivity towards or active avoidance of interaction with the host culture), marginalisation (little possibility or interest in cultural maintenance, often because of enforced cultural loss and little interest in relations with others, often for reasons of exclusion or discrimination), and integration (interest in maintaining one's original culture but actively interacting with the other culture, including, but not limited to, the host society).

4.2 | Coping

The acculturative stress model is grounded in the broader psychological theory of *coping*, defined as "efforts … to manage (i.e., master, tolerate, reduce, minimise) environmental and internal demands, and conflicts among them, which tax or exceed a person's resources" (Lazarus & Launier, 1978, p. 311). Coping modes have been categorised by function as either problem focused (instrumental, task-oriented handling of the problem at hand) or symptom/emotion focused (dealing with emotions that result from the stress) (Lazarus & Folkman, 1984; Lazarus & Launier, 1978). Individuals engaged in *problem-focused coping strategies* display coping behaviours aimed at tackling problems that cause stress, for example, an ISM who decides to acquire a new skill set to become more effective at work. Conversely, *emotion-focused coping strategies* refer to the regulation of emotions that result from the stress, for example, an ISM adjusts his or her goals or expectations in order to avoid disappointments.

4.3 | Integration success

Existing research on ISMs has identified a range of integration-related outcomes. For instance, Cerdin et al. (2014) looked at integration success from the individual perspective in terms of life and job satisfaction. Zikic and Richardson (2016) explored how migrant professionals re-establish and continue their professional careers in the local labour market. Relatedly, Kuehlmann, Stahl, Heinz, Hajro, and Vodosek (2016) studied how ISMs' individual efforts to integrate impact their social integration defined as the degree to which ISMs are incorporated as full-fledged members of the employing organisation. These outcomes can be classified as subjective or objective, and they can be observed either in the personal/family life domain or in the workplace/career domain (see Figure 1). This conceptualisation of integration success allows us to streamline, simplify, and integrate the existing literature.

The relationship between the variables in the various domains is not necessarily straightforward. For example, an ISM who is successful in the workplace/career domain (e.g., high job performance) may not be satisfied with his or her life situation (e.g., separation from family). Thus, integration success is to some extent domain specific, although an ISM's perceptions, attitudes, and behaviours can spill over from one context into another, such as between work and social life and between work and family.

4.4 | Interlinkages between acculturation, coping, and integration success

A small body of research has explored interlinkages between migrant acculturation modes, coping effectiveness, and indicators of integration success. In terms of acculturation modes, research has shown (Berry, 1997, 2005) that *marginalisation* can result in a major loss of the heritage culture and in the appearance of a number of dysfunctional behaviours (such as substance and familial abuse). Looking at acculturative stress as an outcome, the pursuit of *integration* is clearly least stressful, and marginalisation is just as clearly the most stressful; in between are the *assimilation* and *separation* strategies (Berry, 1997, 2005). Similarly, Cerdin et al. (2014) found that the more integrated ISMs are,

	Subjective	**Objective**
Personal/family life domain	➢ Life satisfaction ➢ Subjective well-being ➢ Family satisfaction ➢ Desire to repatriate ➢ Deviant behaviours ➢ Identity uncertainty	➢ Physical health ➢ Mental health ➢ Development of social networks ➢ Host-country embeddedness
Workplace/career domain	➢ Organisational commitment ➢ Subjective career success (e.g., job/career satisfaction) ➢ Work engagement ➢ Capital mobilisation ➢ Professional identity reaffirmation	➢ Job performance ➢ Objective career success (e.g., salary, promotions) ➢ Entrepreneurial success ➢ Social integration

FIGURE 1 Dimensions of integration success

the more successful they are in terms of life satisfaction, job satisfaction, and career success. Along the same lines, Fitzsimmons, Liao, and Thomas (2017) revealed that individuals who identify with and internalise more than one culture (i.e., the integration mode) are most capable of helping organisations to leverage their performance.

In sum, research has suggested that the integration mode of acculturation will be associated with positive outcomes and the marginalisation mode will have unfavourable consequences for ISMs. On the other hand, the separation and assimilation modes of acculturation will likely result in mixed outcomes (i.e., success in one but not necessarily both domains; Berry, 1997). For example, an ISM who has adopted an assimilation mode of acculturation may report success in the workplace/career domain (e.g., career advancement) but may suffer from an identity crisis and lack a strong sense of belonging (Hajro, Zilinskaite, & Stahl, 2017).

However, the relationship between specific acculturation modes and integration success criteria is likely complex. For instance, although marginalisation has been associated with unfavourable outcomes such as low life satisfaction and poor mental health (Berry, 1997, 2005), recent research has suggested that it can have some desirable outcomes, for example, increased ability to influence others to adopt a shared vision (Fitzsimmons, Lee, & Brannen, 2013). These seemingly counterintuitive findings underscore that we know little about the effects of specific acculturation modes on integration success outcomes, the underlying mechanisms, and contingencies.

The same is true for the role of coping for acculturation and successful integration of ISMs. It is generally assumed that in the context of geographic dislocation, problem-focused coping strategies are more functional than *emotion-focused forms of coping* (Feldman & Thomas, 1992). Nevertheless, emotion-focused coping strategies may serve a psychologically adaptive function by helping ISMs to reaffirm their sense of self-worth under conditions of severe acculturative stress and identity threat, which in turn can facilitate positive integration outcomes (Hajro, Zilinskaite, & Stahl, 2017; Lazarus, 2000).

5 | FACTORS INFLUENCING ACCULTURATION, COPING, AND INTEGRATION SUCCESS OF ISMS: A MULTILEVEL PERSPECTIVE

In this section, we review the growing body of literature on ISMs to identify the individual-, organisational-, and societal-level factors that influence acculturation, coping, and integration success of ISMs in both the

personal/family life and workplace/career domains. Our related review of the expatriation literature is conducted with the purpose of identifying salient themes relevant to the study of ISMs in order to illustrate areas of potential cross-fertilisation. As such, it does not cover the expatriation literature in detail (some excellent recent reviews can be found in Kraimer et al., 2016; Shaffer et al., 2012).

Tables 2, 3, and 4 provide a high-level overview of research on, respectively, individual-, organisational-, and societal-level factors identified in theory and empirical research on ISMs as being relevant to acculturation, coping, and integration success. In addition, for each level, we also provide a summary of key findings from relevant research on SIEs and AEs. These tables are not meant to be exhaustive but rather aim to provide a bird's-eye view of current research. In the text, we then discuss the most relevant themes.

A note of caution before we proceed, we believe that the emerging field of ISM research can learn from the much larger body of literature on expatriates, but we are also mindful that the commonly studied outcomes differ across these literatures or research streams (see Table 1). As noted above, although the dominating concept in research on migration is acculturation, the overwhelming emphasis in the expatriation literature is on adjustment. Acculturation is a broad and overarching concept, referring to the continuous process of change in individuals' emotions, cognitions, and behaviours as they come into regular contact with individuals from another culture. Adjustment, on the other hand, is a more specific and narrower concept that refers to how individuals deal with more temporary changes in their environment, which represents critical elements within the process of acculturation (Harrison, Shaffer, & Bhaskar-Shrinivas, 2004). Indeed, Berry (1997) specifically refers to adjustment as a core component of psychological acculturation.

Migrants move to a new country to stay (Cerdin & Selmer, 2014). They not only attempt to achieve "comfort" and some level of competence within the new environment, as expatriates do, but, in most cases, also undergo a process of profound value change and identity shift. In contrast, expatriates are "visitors." Their values and identities are intact, and most of them only learn and adopt new skills and behaviours that allow them to function and be effective in the host environment. Although they may undergo important changes, those changes are nowhere nearly as profound as those experienced by migrants. Having said that, we believe that research on expatriate adjustment is relevant to understanding the challenges facing ISMs, as ISMs also "adjust" to their new environment. From both acculturation and adjustment perspectives, the move to a new country is seen as a stressful life event, resulting in discomfort (stress) and spurring changes that the individual must enact to begin to function effectively in her/his new environment.

5.1 | Individual-level factors

5.1.1 | ISM research

Among the most frequently studied individual-level antecedents is *motivation to migrate and integrate* and the extent to which ISMs' expectations are *met* (or *not met*) in the host-country. Their prominence is likely driven by their acknowledged importance for the acculturation and integration success of ISMs. Richmond (1993) proposed the use of a reactive-proactive continuum of migration motivation in which push motives (e.g., forced migration) characterise the reactive end of the dimension and pull motives (e.g., voluntary migration) cluster at the proactive end. Viewing previous research in this light permits some generalisations about the relationship between motives, stress, and adaptation. For example, Cerdin et al. (2014) found that how migrants perceive their migration while in the home-country, in terms of both gains and losses, impacts the level of efforts to integrate once in the host-country. When the perceived gains in the host-country outweigh the perceived losses in the home-country, making the migration a worthwhile endeavour, ISMs make the necessary efforts to invest in skill development and integrate socially.

Consistent with our conceptual framework (see Figure 2), another key influence on ISMs' personal outcomes is their *choice of coping strategies*. Despite the importance attached to effective coping in the literature on migration and acculturation (Berry, 1997, 2005), little empirical research has been conducted on the coping strategies of these individuals. A noteworthy exception is the work of Zikic and Richardson (2016) who studied how two different groups of migrant professionals (medical and IT professionals) responded to profession-specific pre-entry scripts

TABLE 2 Individual-level antecedents of acculturation, coping, and integration success of international skilled migrants (ISMs) and other types of global workers

	ISMs	SIEs	AEs

Motivation to migrate (MTM) / integrate (MTI)	• Success of ISMs is largely dependent on their motivation to integrate (MTI)
	• Main contributing factor for MTI is motivation to migrate (MTM)
	• Four different types of MTM: dream, felicitous, chance, and desperate (Cerdin et al., 2014)
		• Motivation to expatriate:
		  ○ Pull factors: seeking international experience and job conditions
		  ○ Push factors: family and overseas labour market conditions
		  (Suutari & Brewster, 2000)
			• Willingness to go abroad is positively related to career commitment (Shaffer et al., 2012)

(Met) Expectations	• Moderator between MTM and MTI • Impact varies depending on MTM-type (Cerdin et al., 2014)		• Expatriates with unrealistic expectations face problems during adjustment and coping on their international assignment (Feldman & Thomas, 1992)
Coping problem-focused (PF)/ emotion-focused (EF)	• PF coping is related to integration ○ Effectiveness similar to that illustrated in expatriate literature • EF coping strategies are developed to sustain positive affect and serve to reaffirm self-worth, which can lead to workplace integration (Hajro, Zilinskaite, & Stahl, 2017)		• PF coping strategies are positively related to expatriate adjustment and effectiveness • EF coping strategies have a negative impact on adjustment and effectiveness (Feldman & Thomas, 1992)
Status	• Migrant status highlights inferiority leading to discrimination and lack of power (Al Ariss, 2010)	• Temporary visa status leads to reduced attempts to form long-term friendships with HCNs (Richardson & Zikic, 2007)	• Positive expatriate status is associated with less discrimination (Cranston, 2017)
Personality Traits		• Openness is positively related to personal development of SIEs (Hudson & Inkson, 2006)	• Emotional stability, agreeableness, extroversion, and consciousness are positively related to expatriate success (Caligiuri, 2000)
Cross-cultural competences	• A major factor aiding the socialisation and adaptation of ISMs in organisations (Zikic, 2015)	• Cultural intelligence (CQ) has a positive influence on subjective and objective career success (Cao, Hirschi, & Deller, 2012)	• CQ leads to adjustment that in turn leads to increased performance (Malek & Budhwar, 2013)

(Continues)

TABLE 2 (Continued)

	ISMs	SIEs	AEs
Family	• Spousal adjustment is positively related to work adjustment (Ravasi, Salamin, & Davoine, 2015)	• Family adjustment is significantly correlated to work adjustment (Shaffer et al., 2016)	• Family adjustment is positively related to work adjustment (Black & Stephens, 1989)
Career/symbolic capital	• Adjustment is achieved by accumulating career capital (Winterheller & Hirt, 2017)	• Career capital is related to expatriation success (Al Ariss & Crowley-Henry, 2013)	• International work experience is positively related to cross-cultural adjustment (Lee & Sukoco, 2010)
Language skills	• Higher host-country language ability contributes towards integration (Hajro, Zilinskaite, & Stahl, 2017)	• Higher language ability contributes towards increased interaction adjustment (Peltokorpi, 2008)	• Higher language ability leads to increased adjustment and work performance (Bhaskar-Shrinivas et al., 2005)
Gender	• Male migrants tend to be more career driven, whereas females are more concerned with well-being of themselves and their families (Cooke, Zhang, & Wang, 2013)	• Females: more risk averse, thus accumulate more career capital (Myers & Pringle, 2005)	• Females are more likely to suffer from selection bias, e.g., promotion selection (Shaffer et al., 2012)
Age	• Younger ISMs have higher MTI at work, leading to the development of more effective coping strategies than older ISMs (Hajro, Zilinskaite, & Stahl, 2017)	• Older age is associated with higher levels of job satisfaction (Froese & Peltokorpi, 2011)	• Older age is positively correlated with work adjustment (Templer, Tay, & Chandrasekar, 2006)
Technical abilities			• Technical abilities are positively related to adjustment/acculturation (Mendenhall & Oddou, 1985)

Note. AEs: assigned expatriates; SIEs: self-initiated expatriates.

TABLE 3 Organisational-level antecedents of acculturation, coping, and integration success of international skilled migrants (ISMs) and other types of global workers

	ISMs	Self-initiated expatriates	Assigned expatriates
HRM practices including organisational integration policies	• Effective organisational integration policies are positively related to ISMs' integration into the organisation (Cerdin et al., 2014)	• Recruitment process can lead to overqualification and discrimination (Howe-Walsh & Schyns, 2010)	• Commitment-based HRM practices are positively related to higher levels of adjustment and organisational commitment (Takeuchi, 2010)
Organisational support	• Providing ISMs with adequate organisational support contributes towards their integration (Zikic, 2015)	• Multiple facets of perceived organisational support are correlated with motivation, in turn leading to organisational and community embeddedness (Chen & Shaffer, 2017)	• Organisational support is positively related to adjustment, which is turn is related to performance (Bhaskar-Shrinivas et al., 2005)
Social support (SS)	• Lack of SS is related to increased isolation and decreased integration (Zikic et al., 2010)	• Co-worker support is positively related to adjustment (Howe-Walsh & Schyns, 2010)	• Supervisor support is positively related to job satisfaction (Froese & Peltokorpi, 2011)
Climate for inclusion (CI)	• If appropriate measures are in place it can contribute to integration—if not present, coping strategies can substitute, leading to integration (Hajro, Zilinskaite, & Stahl, 2017)		
Top management support	• Managerial support is a prerequisite for taking advantage of diversity that stems from ISMs (Zikic, 2015)		• Has the potential to positively impact HRM practices and in turn AEs' adjustment (Takeuchi, 2010)
Corporate strategy (CS)			• CS moderates the relationship between HRM strategies and AEs' adjustment (Takeuchi, 2010)
Role/job factors		• A clear definition of the position will have a positive effect on adjustment (Howe-Walsh & Schyns, 2010)	• High role clarity and discretion lead to adjustment (Black, Mendenhall, & Oddou, 1991)

(Continues)

TABLE 3 (Continued)

ISMs	Self-initiated expatriates	Assigned expatriates
Financial incentives	• Positively associated with motivation to migrate/expatriate (Shaffer et al., 2012)	• Positively associated with motivation to migrate/expatriate (Shaffer et al., 2012)
Organisational size		• Larger organisations have more resources that lead to adjustment (Lazarova et al., 2010)
Organisational level		• Higher level: less likely to benefit from problem-focused coping and adjustment to nonwork life (vice versa; Stahl & Caligiuri, 2005)

TABLE 4 Societal-level antecedents of acculturation, coping, and integration success of international skilled migrants (ISMs) and other types of global workers

	ISMs	Self-initiated expatriates	Assigned expatriates
Immigration and integration policies	• Institutional barriers can lead to career constraints and cause stress, which is related to acute mental health problems (Carr et al., 2005)	• Institutional barriers lead to career constraints, e.g., overqualification, lower salaries, fewer promotions, and less career satisfaction (Shaffer et al., 2012)	• Do not suffer from as many institutional barriers because of organisational support (Shaffer et al., 2012)
Societal attitudes, discrimination, and prejudice	• Acculturation type depends on host-country societal attitudes, e.g., pluralism allowing integration to occur (Berry, 1997)	• Mono-cultural orientations in societies make it more difficult to integrate or find jobs (Al Ariss & Özbilgin, 2010)	
Cultural and institutional distance	• Larger cultural distance makes it more difficult to adapt and thus acculturate (Berry, 1997; Xu et al., 2004)	• Larger cultural distance is associated with lower job satisfaction because it is related to stress and anxiety (Froese & Peltokorpi, 2011)	• Larger cultural and institutional distance is negatively related to nonwork adjustment (Stahl & Caligiuri, 2005; Xu et al., 2004)
Host-country ethnocentrism (HCE)	• Higher HCE triggers separation and constraints integration (Hajro, Zilinskaite, & Stahl, 2017)		• HCE is negatively correlated to adjustment (Templer, 2010)
Economic factors	• Economic downturns have severe negative effects on migrants' ability to acquire employment (Aycan & Berry, 1996)		
Standard of living		• Influences the choice to migrate to certain locations (Shaffer et al., 2016)	• A resource that is negatively related to expatriates' turnover tendencies (Birdseye & Hill, 1995)
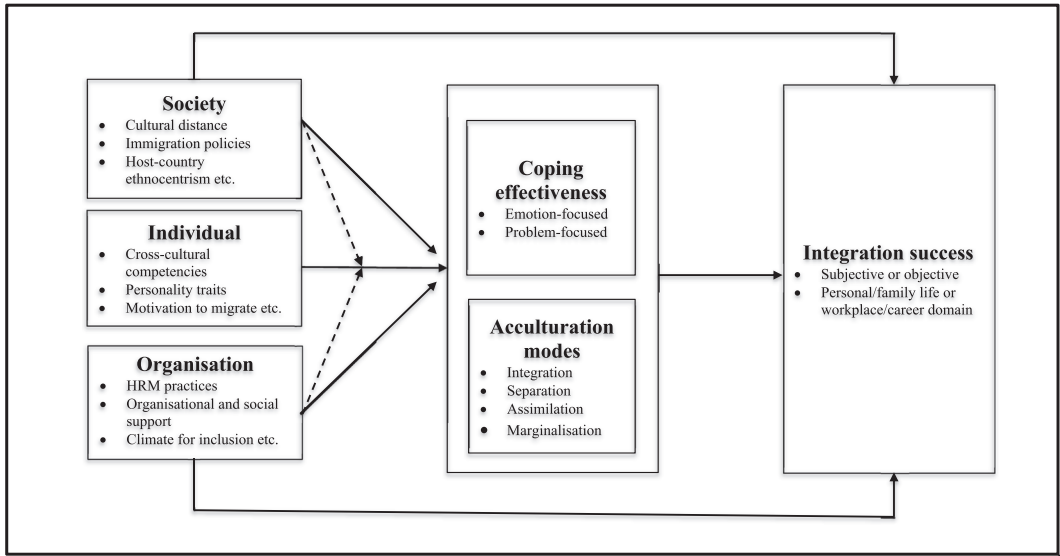
FIGURE 2 Multilevel framework of ISMs' acculturation modes, coping effectiveness, and integration success

when trying to re-enter their professions in Canada. They found that the traditional and well-established normative setting of medicine created widespread occupational closure that led to less adaptive forms of identity work such as reactive identity customisation, identity struggle, and ultimately, identity crisis. IT professionals also faced profession-specific pre-entry scripts, but their scripts were less heavily regulated and more flexible. This allowed for a proactive form of identity work resulting in proactive customisation, identity enrichment, and eventually, identity growth. With the aim to investigate how migrants deal with challenges they encounter in their workplaces, Hajro, Zilinskaite, and Stahl (2017) conducted 84 semistructured interviews with ISMs working for large organisations in Austria. The authors identified five problem-focused (building and leveraging social networks, seeking task support, skills development, social learning, and exploring/exploiting new opportunities) and eight emotion-focused (creating positive social distinctions, preservation, expectation adjustment, positive reappraisal, resignation, escapism, seeking out social–emotional support, and using alternative resources to strengthen emotional resilience) coping categories. Their study also provided evidence that the effectiveness of individual coping strategies is highly context-dependent and that both problem-focused and emotion-focused forms of coping can be functional and dysfunctional in some situations.

A further important antecedent of migrants' integration outcomes are *demographic variables* such as race, ethnicity, and religion, because they have been related both to *cultural identity* and issues of *status* and *power*. According to Cox (1993), cultural identities stem from membership in groups that are socioculturally distinct. They are often associated with particular physical (e.g., skin colour) and stylistic features (e.g., Muslim women wearing the hijab) that are more or less identifiable. Different cultural identities in the larger society are linked to certain power positions such that some cultural identity groups have greater power, prestige, and status than others (Ely & Thomas, 2001). There is much theoretical and empirical support for the notion that paying attention to differences in power and status is critical to understanding the dynamics of diversity in organisations and societies (Lau & Murnighan, 1998). For example, a comparative study of earnings outcomes of both first- and second-generation migrants of different origins in France and the United Kingdom showed that, after controlling for education, with the exception of ethnically White migrants, all other ethnic groups earn substantially less than their native counterparts (Algan, Dustmann, Glitz, & Manning, 2009). Because there are stronger stereotypes about these individuals, they are often segregated not only from native workers but also from workers of more advantaged ethnic groups (e.g., Western Europeans; Glitz, 2012). Hence, we contend that *demographic characteristics* such as *race*, *ethnicity*, and *religion* will create a range of challenges for ISMs through their influence on the ISMs' status.

5.1.2 | Relevant expatriation research

Research on the individual level influences on the integration success of AEs, SIEs, and ISMs has both overlaps and a fair amount of divergence. The latter includes the study of *personality traits* and related individual skills, abilities, and competencies. Personality traits have received significant attention as meaningful predictors of expatriate adjustment and performance but ISM research has largely overlooked them. For example, Caligiuri (2000) examined the relationships between the *Big Five* personality characteristics and different criteria of expatriate success, and Shaffer et al. (2006) explored the effect of personality traits on adjustment, withdrawal cognitions, and performance. Personality variables have also been examined in SIE research. For example, Peltokorpi (2008) found that emotional stability and cultural empathy positively affected work and nonwork-related adjustment of SIEs to Japan, and a study of volunteer SIEs from New Zealand discovered that high levels of openness and agreeability led to positive career-related outcomes (Hudson & Inkson, 2006).

Research on AEs has also examined a host of variables that can be broadly referred to as *cross-cultural competencies*, such as cultural empathy, cross-cultural relationship efficacy, or conflict resolution skills, and has suggested that such "desirable" competencies facilitate adjustment and are associated with increased performance (Bhaskar-Shrinivas et al., 2005). For example, Shaffer et al. (2006) found that cultural flexibility was a significant predictor of cultural and work adjustment, as well as withdrawal cognitions. The (in)competency of ethnocentrism was negatively related to adjustment and performance and positively related to withdrawal cognitions.

Another major group of variables discussed in expatriate research—but largely overlooked in the literature on ISMs—are *family-related factors* (Takeuchi, 2010). Studies on AEs have most frequently explored the positive relationship between spousal adjustment and expatriate adjustment (and subsequently, with outcomes influenced by adjustment, such as performance or engagement; e.g., Lazarova, Westman, & Shaffer, 2010). A much smaller body of research exists on the role of SIE families. Perhaps this is because the demographic profile of SIEs tends to differ. Studies have suggested that SIEs are more likely to be single and for those who are not SIE spouses are more likely to work in the host-country (Suutari & Brewster, 2000). Broadly speaking, partners and families are also more likely to be seen as a factor driving SIEs to move (i.e., individuals choosing to become SIEs to follow a loved one abroad) rather than as a potential barrier to mobility (Doherty, 2013). In short, the expatriation literature has established that families are important for adjustment, well-being, and performance—an insight that may be even more applicable to ISMs, given that the family is often their sole source of social support.

5.2 | Organisational-level factors

5.2.1 | ISM research

Our overview of this literature suggests that research on the organisational drivers of ISMs' acculturation, coping effectiveness, and integration success is still in its infancy. A notable exception is the work of Kuehlmann et al. (2016). The authors conducted a study of small- and medium-sized enterprises in Germany, Austria, Italy, and Spain that explored how *HRM practices* (e.g., training, mentoring, and career development), *social support* (e.g., co-worker and supervisor support), and ISMs' individual *efforts to integrate* (e.g., effort invested in building and maintaining social relationships) impact migrants' social integration, organisational commitment, and job satisfaction. They found that unless the organisational context is supportive of cultural diversity and effective HRM policies and practices are in place, ISMs will find it difficult to integrate. ISMs working in nonsupportive environments will feel a sense of discouragement that will trigger withdrawal and/or denial behaviours, such as refusing to spend time with activities that provide contact to host-country nationals. The opposite will apply if ISMs feel they can rely on their co-workers and supervisors when things get tough at work. Under these circumstances, ISMs will develop effective coping strategies facilitating social integration, which, in turn, will result in high organisational commitment and job satisfaction of ISMs.

A further organisational antecedent is *organisational integration policy* (Cerdin et al., 2014). Cerdin et al. (2014) found that ISMs who feel supported by their organisations are likely to be more motivated to integrate than those who feel they are left alone in dealing with the process of integration. When ISMs strongly frame their migration in terms of loss (e.g., fleeing from a war-torn country), in particular, organisational integration policies significantly strengthen the relationship between motivation to migrate and motivation to integrate because it allows them to compensate for the loss of their job in the home-country.

HRM practices are a key influence on ISMs' acculturation and coping. Hajro, Zilinskaite, and Stahl (2017) found that HRM-related factors such as a lack of HRM support for foreign employees triggered mainly problem-focused coping strategies aimed at addressing the sources of stress; however, biased recruitment and selection processes and unfair compensation and promotion practices resulted in a range of emotion-focused coping strategies aimed at mitigating stress. Similarly, Zikic (2015) argued that to take advantage of skilled migrants' career capital, organisations must implement HRM policies that will help ISMs overcome the major structural and professional barriers related to using their foreign "know-how" in the host-country, such as inclusive recruitment, collaboration with immigration agencies, and provision of mentoring and networking opportunities to migrant employees.

Climate for inclusion is a further organisational aspect that has a significant impact on the quality of employees' cross-cultural interactions. It provides the social cues, norms, and meanings that shape behaviour of diverse employees (Nishii, 2013). Hajro, Gibson, and Pudelko (2017) studied 11 multinational corporations and found that in companies with policy-focused climates, characterised by a concern for diversity primarily from a policy perspective, ISMs were usually prompted to decrease the significance of their culture of origin and conform to corporate norms. Strong emphasis on conformity in combination with the use of standardised guidelines for prescribed behaviours forced skilled migrants to assimilate. On the other hand, in organisations with awareness-focused diversity climates in which core principles were not defined a priori and employees were free to decide how to work together, ISMs retained a strong sense of their cultural identity. In contrast, in engagement-focused climates characterised by a limited set of core values considered central to the organisation but otherwise open to allowing cultural differences to flourish, ISMs successfully integrated into their workplaces.

5.2.2 | Relevant expatriation research

Unlike ISM research, expatriation research (and especially AE research) has investigated a range of aspects of the organisational context as drivers of expatriate outcomes. This research has focused on different forms of support provided by the organisation (Kraimer, Wayne, & Jaworski, 2001; Takeuchi, Wang, Marinova, & Yao, 2009). Scholars have found evidence that organisational support relates positively to expatriate adjustment (Caligiuri, Joshi, & Lazarova, 1999), expatriate integration in the host-country (Kraimer et al., 2001), organisational commitment (Guzzo, Noonan, & Elron, 1994), and intentions to remain on an assignment (Shaffer, Harrison, Gilley, & Luk, 2001). Research has also investigated the effect of domain-specific perceived organisational support (POS) and has discovered that both on- and off-the-job POS is related to adjustment and interact in such a way that consistent support leads to better general and work adjustment (Takeuchi et al., 2009). Relatedly, theoretical and empirical work has shown that social support from co-workers and superiors is instrumental in AE adjustment and effectiveness (Bhaskar-Shrinivas et al., 2005; Kraimer et al., 2016).

Perhaps unsurprisingly, given the focus on individual initiative for the move, there is relatively less literature on organisational factors and SIEs. Among the studies that we identified, there are some parallels to the studies of AEs. For example, Chen and Shaffer (2017) found that POS promotes SIEs' autonomous motivation, which in turn enhances their organisational and community embeddedness. Bozionelos (2009) discovered that peer support and mentor support were related to job satisfaction and turnover intention among self-expatriated nurses. Research has also suggested that compared with AEs, SIEs work in different types of organisations, at lower organisational levels, and are more likely to be on temporary contracts (Suutari & Brewster, 2000).

5.3 | Societal-level factors

5.3.1 | ISM research

Among the antecedent factors identified in the literature on ISMs, immigration policies (how many and what type of migrants to let into a country) and integration policies (what happens to migrants once they have arrived) are especially important to the integration success of ISMs. These policies affect how receiving nations socially integrate underrepresented members (Berry, 1997; Syed, 2008). For most of the 20th century, the perspective of assimilation theory has dominated much of the political thinking. This approach builds upon the following assumptions: (a) diverse ethnic groups come to share a common culture, (b) original cultural and behavioural patterns gradually disappear in favour of new ones, and (c) diverse migrant groups are expected to "melt" into the mainstream culture through a process of cultural, social, and economic integration (Algan, Bisin, Manning, & Verdier, 2012). In the 1960s, this classical assimilation perspective was challenged, and new groups of migrants were encouraged to preserve their ethnic and religious identities. But this made cultural differences between migrants and natives persist, even after long-term residence in the host-country (Gans, 1992). This was followed by the advent of a multiculturalism. Proponents of this approach argued that migrants are not passive subjects to be assimilated but actively shape their own identities (Glazer & Moynihan, 1970). Many cultural characteristics of migrants were preserved in a state of uneasy coexistence with the attitudes of the host-country (Algan et al., 2012). The United Kingdom provides an example. It emphasises a limited set of core principles seen as central to the host society but also allows differences to flourish in other respects. Thus, all migrants who wish to become citizens must pass a test on the language, culture, and history of the host-country (Algan et al., 2009). At the same time, there are cultural and religious exemptions to law and practice (e.g., policewomen can wear the hijab on duty). Multiculturalism has been deemed as the most successful approach to date (Algan et al., 2012).

Similar to the previous point, another key influence on ISMs' acculturation and coping are *societal attitudes towards migrants and foreigners* (e.g., discrimination, prejudice, and stigmatisation). For instance, Al Ariss, Koall, Özbilgin, and Suutari (2013) studied how migrants in France and Germany deal with instances of discrimination. Empirical findings revealed that in France, migrants question inequalities, recognise them, and navigate within them by resisting, blending, or choosing subversion. Resisting is an agentic coping strategy involving active noncompliance with social routines. Blending occurs when migrants chose to render themselves invisible through imitating the normative practices. Subversion involves reinterpretation and manipulation of the normative structures and routines (Özbilgin, 1998). In the case of Germany, the picture was bleaker. Interviewees found themselves located within rigid, discriminatory structures of employment they could not change. Hence, they chose to deal with stressors by physically and/or mentally removing themselves from the situation (e.g., leaving Germany and returning to their country of origin) or refusing to recognise the inequalities and/or rendering them normal (Al Ariss et al., 2013).

Another aspect that affects the coping strategies and acculturation modes of ISMs is the accreditation and recognition of foreign qualifications and work experience (Syed, 2008). Institutions in the receiving countries often treat foreign qualifications and work experience, especially from emerging/developing countries, as less worthy than local qualifications and work experience (Dietz et al., 2015). There are many reasons for this. Sometimes, the qualifications from emerging/developing countries fail to measure up to the requirements in some developed countries. Structural differences between different professions may also prevent ISMs from entering certain occupations (e.g., medicine, a highly regulated profession characterised by a strong regulatory pillar that may create "occupational closure"; Zikic & Richardson, 2016). Yet the reasons for discounting the skills of ISMs are not always based on objective criteria but rather may reflect entrenched discrimination, which restricts skilled migrants' entry into competitive job markets in the host economy (Binggeli et al., 2013; Dietz et al., 2015; Syed, 2008). These contextual influences, all beyond the control of ISMs, often trigger dysfunctional coping strategies (e.g., escapism), lead to psychological problems (e.g., low self-esteem), and result in acculturation difficulties (Hajro, Zilinskaite, & Stahl, 2017).

5.3.2 | Relevant expatriation research

By definition, AE and SIE relocations are temporary. As such, AEs and SIEs strive to adjust but not necessarily acculturate in the host societies. Especially in the case of AEs, the conditions of their job contracts may be largely determined by home-company rules, and their company assists them with getting any necessary work permits and visas. They may also, whether by choice or circumstances, have relatively little interaction with the host-country society outside of their work (for example, if they are housed in expatriate compounds). It is therefore perhaps unsurprising that societal-level antecedents tend not to be discussed much in the AE research. Similarly, SIE research has largely left the role of the host-country environment unaddressed (for notable exceptions, see Al Ariss & Özbilgin, 2010; Bozionelos, 2009).

The one macro-level variable that has been studied quite extensively is *cultural distance* (how dissimilar two countries are in terms of their values and norms). Less extensively studied is *institutional distance* (how dissimilar countries are in terms of their institutional arrangements). The general finding is that the greater the distance, the lower the adjustment (Bhaskar-Shrinivas et al., 2005; Xu, Pan, & Beamish, 2004). This seems to be the case for both AEs and SIEs (Chen, Kirkman, Kim, & Farh, 2010; Stahl & Caligiuri, 2005). Greater cultural differences may trigger negative intergroup attitudes and induce culture conflict leading to adjustment difficulties. Cultural distance has also been linked with lower job satisfaction (Froese & Peltokorpi, 2011), whereas institutional distance has been shown to have a negative impact on successful work adjustment (Ramsey, 2005).

Interestingly, empirical evidence has shown that cultural similarity (i.e., small cultural distance) may also be problematic because expatriates entering similar environments may be less able to detect existing cultural differences (Selmer, Chiu, & Shenkar, 2007). These findings support the idea that perceived country similarity is negatively related to meet expectations, which, in turn, are important for adjustment (Caligiuri, Phillips, Lazarova, Tarique, & Burgi, 2001).

6 | PUTTING EVERYTHING TOGETHER: A MULTILEVEL FRAMEWORK OF THE DRIVERS OF ISMS' ACCULTURATION MODES, COPING EFFECTIVENESS, AND INTEGRATION SUCCESS

In summarising the drivers of acculturation, coping, and integration success of ISMs, we propose a multilevel framework that models how variables at the individual-, organisational-, and societal-level may affect ISMs' mode of acculturation and their effectiveness in coping with the personal and work-related challenges faced in their host-countries. In turn, these intermediate outcomes are likely to influence various aspects of ISMs' integration success, as illustrated by Figure 2.

Consistent with the multilevel nature of the factors driving the acculturation, coping, and integration success of ISMs, a key premise of the framework is the notion that ISMs' individual outcomes are affected by influences at multiple levels and that no single antecedent variable or set of variables at one level (e.g., individual traits, motives, or competences) is likely to predict or explain the acculturation dynamics, coping effectiveness, and integration success of ISMs. Moreover, factors at different levels are likely to combine and interact to influence ISMs' individual outcomes. For example, effective organisational support systems (e.g., in the form of relocation services to assist ISMs with the visa application process or the partner's job search) may compensate for deficiencies in the host-country's integration policies and practices, such as overly bureaucratic procedures and rigid, discriminatory structures of employment.

Because the antecedent factors identified in this conceptual review work in concert rather than in isolation, future research should examine the most critical combinations of variables. The latter seems important because individual differences, such as power, status, and minority group membership, might interact with variables and processes at the organisational and societal levels. For example, negative societal attitudes towards foreigners might be less constraining for higher status individuals (e.g., expatriates from Western Europe) and more

constraining for lower status individuals (e.g., migrants from developing nations), who are expected to assimilate into the mainstream culture.

7 | GAPS, OPEN QUESTIONS, AND IMPLICATIONS FOR FUTURE RESEARCH

In this section, we offer several directions for future research. We note that with regard to individual-level antecedents, very little or no research has been done on how ISMs' personality traits, cross-cultural competences, and family dynamics are associated with their acculturation modes, coping effectiveness, and integration success outcomes. For example, research is needed to identify spousal characteristics (e.g., personality and career orientation) and family-related factors (e.g., age of children and family functioning) that affect ISMs' coping strategies and acculturation outcomes. Migrants relocate for many reasons and face many challenges. Some are forced by war, often after long periods of loss, demoralisation, and debilitating internment to leave their countries. Others choose to leave to better themselves. These and other variations must surely make a difference in how these individuals adapt to relocation (Cerdin et al., 2014; Shaffer et al., 2012). Given that an ISM's family or partner may be the sole source of social support during this critical time, it is essential to study family characteristics that support these individuals in sustaining a positive state of affect and in continuing with their integration efforts in light of the challenges they face.

In terms of *organisational-level antecedents*, with one notable exception (Kuehlmann et al., 2016), there has been no empirical research on the impact of top management commitment, co-worker and supervisor support, financial incentives, and training on acculturation, coping, and integration success of ISMs. Likewise, the role of the firm's internationalisation strategy (i.e., global, international, multidomestic, and transnational) has been neglected in existing research. For example, we do not know how a focus on global integration versus local responsiveness influences individual-level outcomes of ISMs. In contrast to Takeuchi (2010), who predicts a positive relationship between global integration strategy and expatriate adjustment, we propose that the opposite will apply to ISMs. If the organisation suppresses differences for the sake of a uniform, centralised strategic approach and a strong emphasis on global integration, it will likely prevent ISMs from leveraging their knowledge, skills, and experiences. By contrast, a focus on both local responsiveness and global integration (i.e., a transnational approach) may allow individuals to follow "best corporate practices" but also leave room for flexibility and adaptation. Hence, it is likely that ISMs in such companies will feel encouraged to maintain their original culture and participate in the dominant culture (Hajro, Gibson, & Pudelko, 2017; Hajro & Pudelko, 2012).

Concerning *societal-level antecedents*, there has been no or very little research on the impact of cultural and institutional distance on acculturation, coping, and integration success of ISMs (Berry, 1997; Carr, Inkson, & Thorn, 2005). Given that value similarity between individuals and their co-workers and organisations generally results in positive outcomes (Meglino & Ravlin, 1998), we anticipate that deep-level cultural differences will impact acculturation dynamics and coping strategies of ISMs (House, Hanges, Javidan, Dorfman, & Gupta, 2004). Related to this, how "tight" or "loose" the host culture is in terms of social norms and expectations is another key variable at the societal-level that may affect ISMs' integration success. The construct of *cultural tightness–looseness* refers to the fact that countries differ in the strength of the social norms and the extent of sanctioning that occurs (Gelfand, Nishii, & Raver, 2006). Although it is unclear to what extent social norms apply to migrants versus locals (it may be that migrants are given more or less latitude to depart from norms because they are foreign), it seems likely that ISMs will experience greater social pressure to assimilate in culturally tight as opposed to looser countries.

8 | IMPLICATIONS FOR PRACTICE

The ideas and insights generated in this review also have several important practical implications. First of all, we argue that organisations need to create environments that are inclusive of all employees. Inclusive climates need

to be designed in a way that communicates a clear and consistent message regarding a limited number of core principles while simultaneously allowing and encouraging the recognition and flourishing of cultural differences (Hajro, Gibson, & Pudelko, 2017).

Second, HRM specialists need to implement specific employment and diversity practices that promote the elimination of bias. Such practices will create perceptions of justice and signal the existence of a "level playing field" to ISMs (Colquitt, Noe, & Jackson, 2002). On the other hand, biased employment practices will exacerbate demographically based status differentials in organisations (Greenhaus, Parasuraman, & Wormley, 1990) leading to segregation or marginalisation (Hajro, Gibson, & Pudelko, 2017). Furthermore, organisations must ensure that the diverse perspectives of ISMs are actively sought and integrated, even if the ideas expressed may upset the status quo (Nishii, 2013). Inclusion in decision making, in turn, will motivate ISMs to engage in interactions with host-country nationals.

Finally, migration policies need to be designed in a way that facilitates migrants' contributions to the economy and enables ISMs to realise their full labour market potential, which can also help boost the economic growth of the host-country.

9 | CONCLUSION

We have summarised and synthesised the empirical research on ISMs and related literatures and integrated our findings into a comprehensive, multilevel framework of the factors driving the acculturation, coping, and integration success of ISMs. Migration is a topic that is of great importance to organisations and society—one of the "grand challenges" (George, Howard-Grenville, Joshi, & Tihanyi, 2016)—and researchers have just begun to scratch the surface in terms of providing specific, research-based recommendations on how to promote the integration of the growing number of individuals affected by migration. We hope that our review and conceptual framework will encourage scholars to examine areas in which our understanding of the individual-, organisational- and societal-level antecedents and key drivers of ISMs' integration success can be further enhanced and fine-tuned.

ENDNOTE

[1]Expatriate adjustment refers to the degree of fit or psychological comfort and familiarity that individuals feel with different aspects of foreign culture (Black & Stephens, 1989).

CONFLICTS OF INTEREST

The authors declare that they have no conflict of interest.

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