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Expatriate-Teacher Turnover in the International School Industry of China

Richard IK Ihejieta
Walden University

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Walden University

College of Management and Technology

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Richard IK Ihejieta

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Walden University
2020

Abstract

Expatriate-Teacher Turnover in the International School Industry of China

by

Richard IK Ihejieta

M. Phil., Walden University, 2020

PGDE, Bethel University, 2014

M.S, Argosy University, 2011

B.Phil. Pontifical Urban University, 1998

Dissertation Submitted in Partial Fulfillment

of the Requirements for the Degree of

Doctor of Philosophy

Management

Walden University

September 2020

Abstract

Expatriate-teacher turnover disrupts the social and academic lives of students in the international school industry of China. The human resource budgets of these schools are unsustainable and expatriate-teacher turnover significantly affects globalization and international businesses. The rate of expatriate-teacher turnover in the international school industry of China, which results in financial losses and creates anxiety for the students, necessitated an examination of expatriate-teacher turnover in the international school industry of China. This qualitative descriptive phenomenological study of expatriate-teacher turnover in the international school industry of China, was framed by the concepts of the *internationalized* schools in China and teacher turnover in international schools, to identify the factors that affect expatriate-teacher turnover in the international school industry of China. My qualitative interview transcripts from 20 expatriate-teachers who were current or former expatriate-teachers of the international school industry of China in the past 10 years, was analyzed with NVivo, into codes, which yielded these factors causing expatriate-teacher turnover: internet censorship, staff and student anxiety, lack of approved trade union, competition in the industry, high income tax, textbook censorship, leadership, and culture shock. This study may contribute to positive social change by identifying the causes of expatriate-teacher turnover, by making the human resource budgets of the international schools in China cost-effective, and by improving the social and the academic lives of the students in the international school industry of China.

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Dedication

I would like to dedicate this dissertation and the past 8 years of my doctoral research to my late mother, Mrs. Caroline Ezinne Ihejieta, who passed away on the 8th of December 2000, for teaching me the virtues of resilience, patience, and perseverance. To my late father Pa Francis Nwosu Ihejieta for inspiring me to study business and management, by his endless sacrifices, business engagements, and hard work throughout his lifetime.

This PhD study is also dedicated to my lovely wife Ugochinyerem 'Obidiya' Ihejieta for her unalloyed love and support, my amiable son Chinecherem for bringing so much joy to our lives, and my best friend/brother Larry Iweajunwa for his constant encouragement, love, and moral support. I am thankful to Almighty God for His guidance, protection, and kindness.

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Chapter 1: Introduction to the Study

A study conducted by a state-owned human resource department, China International Recruiting Services (CIRS) reported an imbalance between supply and demand in the recruitment of expatriate-teachers in China (Huan, 2015). According to Chen (2015), approximately 4,000 expatriate-teachers are needed in international schools across China every school year to fill teaching vacancies, but most expatriates coming to China are unwilling to enter the international education industry. According to Bunnell (2016), with the rapid growth seen in the international school industry due to globalization in the past 2 decades, by 2022 there will be more than 10,000 international schools, catering to an estimated 4.5 million students around the world. Therefore, the demand for expatriate-teachers in 2022 could rise to as many as 500,000.

The public security bureau in China estimated that there are approximately 225,000 expatriates in China (Roberts, 2012), creating an enormous need for international academic curriculums for expatriate children to have an easy transition into higher education in their home countries. Expatriate-teacher turnover is a major problem that has been affecting the international schools in China in the past few years. According to Sullivan (2014), the employment longevity of expatriate-teachers in international schools in China is between 3 and 5 years. Poole (2018) noted that the international school industry of China is under-researched and conceptual in nature, despite the rapid growth the industry has witnessed in the past 2 decades.

This qualitative descriptive phenomenological study was needed to understand the factors affecting expatriate-teacher turnover, which may lead to an identification of

strategies that could help to reduce expatriate-teacher turnover in the industry, sustain globalization in China, and improve the wellbeing of expatriate children in China. In this chapter, I will present the background of the study, the problem statement, purpose of the study, the research question, the conceptual framework, nature of the study, definitions, assumptions, scope and delimitations, and the significance of the study. I will describe the significance of this study to theory and practice, and I will discuss the significance to social change.

Background of the Study

Expatriate-teacher turnover in the international school industry is disruptive and widely reported. For example, Ingersoll, Hirschhorn, Landine, and Sears (2018) and Tkachyk (2017) noted that the global teacher shortage disrupts the United Nation's sustainable goal of providing every child equitable and inclusive primary and secondary education and upsets the values of school communities. Chris (2016) reported that teacher turnover creates negative consequences for students' education in many ways, especially students from low-income families. A study conducted in New York City schools revealed that students in schools with higher teacher turnover scored lower in the main subjects such as mathematics and English Language (Ronfeldt, Lakeford, Loeb, & Wyckoff, 2011). The causes of turnover are important to understand. In his study of expatriate-employee adjustment in China, Shaffer (2019) found that most expatriate managers find their assignment to China frustrating. Yet, the causes of this frustration are not well documented in the scholarly research.

Ingersoll et al. (2018) and Burke (2017) studied the Global Teacher Education Program (GTEP), and the aim of these institutions to tackle the current global international teacher shortage crisis, especially the shortage of Western expatriate-teachers in international schools in non-English speaking countries. Also, Schuler, Jackson, and Tarque (2011); Shaffer (2019); and Sullivan (2014) studied different views on expatriate adjustments overseas, strategies of supporting overseas assignment, and managing global talents. Ma, Silva, Callan, and Trigo (2015) noted that effective recruiting and retaining of expatriate-employees are important for every multinational organization to survive in the intensive global competition. Lee, He, and Xie (2016) and Zhu and Nyland (2017) noted that there is intense competition among employers in China to hire and retain expatriate talents. With the influx of multinational organizations into China in the past 3 decades as reported by He, Long, and Kuvaas (2015), expatriate-teacher turnover in the international school industry, continues to rise. Most expatriate-teachers in China relocate to other countries or back to their home countries after working in China for 3 to 5 years.

Research has been performed on teacher turnover in international schools in countries like Tanzania, Indonesia, Egypt, and Argentina (Odland & Ruzucka, 2009). Research has also been performed on the effects of relational trust and teacher turnover in charter schools in America (Chris, 2016), and Ronfeldt et al. (2011) studied the effects of teacher turnover on student achievement. Yet, as Poole (2018) reported, the international school industry of China is a relatively new phenomenon and a product of the 21st century globalization, with limited documentation in the scholarly literature. Poole (2019)

also reported that the most recent studies on the Type C international school industry of China from Blyth (2017), Burke (2015), Hayden (2016), and Poole (2018) were all focused on the differentiation of schools in China and precarious nature of expatriate-teachers in the international school industry of China. However, none of the studies focused on the factors leading to challenges with expatriate-teacher retention in the international school industry of China.

Problem Statement

Kassar et al. (2015) noted that approximately 22.2% of expatriate workers decide to quit their overseas assignments before the completion date, even with cross-cultural training. The effects of this turnover according to Paul, Jeffery, Sarah, and Adam (2014) are that teacher turnover systematically disrupts a schools' social trust, resources, and support for students. The general management problem I addressed in this study was that expatriate-teacher turnover significantly affects globalization and international businesses among nations (Hyounae, Vincent, & Manisha, 2013).

According to Tristan (2017), there is overall neglect in the literature on the effects of expatriate-teacher turnover in the international school industry. Little is known, researched, or discussed about expatriate-teachers even in mainstream education literature. Although research exists on employee turnover in other industries, no research exists that specifically discusses expatriate-teacher turnover in the international school industry of China. With the middling position of expatriate-teacher in international relations and globalization, Tarc and Mishra (2015) noted that discussion on sustaining transnational mobility and trade should incorporate expatriate-teacher retention strategies.

The independent quality of international schools means that collecting comprehensive and accurate data on issues such as teacher turnover has proven difficult. However, although the data available from surveys regarding teachers leaving schools paint a rudimentary picture of the degree of turnover, they do not offer specific enough information to analyze insightfully the phenomenon of teachers turnover in international schools (Odland & Ruzicka, 2009; Yang et al., 2019).

A seminal study examining international school teachers' employment experiences (Odland & Ruzicka, 2009) claimed that problems with administrative leadership are most likely to precipitate rapid turnover. This finding is consistent with the research of teacher turnover in internationalized schools by Roskell (2013) where all the teachers who terminated their contracts cited problems with leadership and a belief that they were not able to perform effectively, as the primary reason for premature departure. Yet, few studies have explained, in-depth, why teachers in international schools elect to abort the adjustment process and leave prematurely (Bailey & Cooler, 2019). Despite some awareness of the issue in the literature, there is a gap in the research regarding expatriate-teacher turnover in the international education industry of China (Poole, 2019). As a result, the specific research problem was that there is a lack of knowledge and understanding about the factors that cause expatriate-teacher turnover in the international school industry of China.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this qualitative descriptive phenomenological study was to identify the factors that affect expatriate-teacher turnover in the international school

industry of China. The qualitative descriptive phenomenological method portrays the lived-experiences of research participants, by focusing on their unique views on the phenomenon, devoid of deception (Giorgi, 2009). This research method helps the researcher to keep the perspectives of research participants in the research, without altering their viewpoints, because it is the subjective-psychological perspectives of research participants that should capture the interest of the researcher (Giorgi & Giorgi, 2003). This research was needed because teacher turnover systematically disrupts a school's social trust, human resource management, and support for students (Paul, Jeffrey, Sarah, & Adam, 2014).

Research Question

What are the lived-experiences of expatriate-teachers regarding causes of turnover and their career intentions in the international school industry of China?

Conceptual Framework for the Study

The purpose of this qualitative descriptive phenomenological study was to identify the factors that affect expatriate-teacher turnover in the international school industry of China. The findings of this empirical investigation are aimed at advancing knowledge and a deeper understanding of the experiences of expatriate-teachers in international schools in China. This study was framed by two key concepts that focus on expatriate-teacher turnover in the international school industry of China: Poole's (2018) concept of *internationalized* schools in China and Odland and Ruzicka's (2009) concept of teacher turnover in international schools.

According to Poole (2018), the international school industry of China is a new hybrid type of school system, often referred to as Type C or *internationalized* schools that cater to children of expatriates and affluent Chinese families. Poole (2019) noted that the Type C international school industry of China extends Bunnell's (2014; 2016) thesis that international education teachers (IETs) are forming a *global education precariat*. Poole grounded his concept of internationalized schools on Bourdieu's (2003) notion of cultural, symbolic, and social capital. Within the context of an internationalized school, cross-cultural capital does not reproduce social stratification, as in the original theory, but rather the opposite; it drives individuals' challenges to a school's master narrative while also constructing a professional identity (Poole, 2019). According to Standing (2011), there is a wave of considerable anger and frustration about this global class of workers, who are not full citizens in the countries where they work, with intense job insecurity, and with limited protection from national labor and immigration laws.

Odland and Ruzicka (2009) defined *teacher turnover* as a teacher's employment mobility between schools in a school system. They noted that teacher turnover is a situation where a significant number of teachers exit from a school which negatively affects the school in different ways. A high rate of teacher turnover harms student's achievement because teachers make a significant influence on students. Therefore, it is important to address the reasons why teachers are dissatisfied with their jobs in a school, to maintain efficiency and to stem the teacher shortage crisis in the school system (Carver-Thomas & Darling-Hammond, 2017).

Yang et al. (2017) followed up Odland and Ruzicka's (2009) qualitative research and further defined the concept of teacher turnover in international schools through the theoretical lens of self-determination theory (Deci & Ryan, 1985), which articulates that the process of internalization allows extrinsic motivation to be autonomous, integrating an identification with other interest and values (Deci, Koestner, & Ryan, 2001; Ryan & Deci, 2000). Crucial for the internalization of extrinsic motivation for teachers in international schools to operate effectively is the need for relatedness and supportive work climates that promote the satisfaction of basic psychological needs (Gagne & Deci, 2005; Roskell, 2013).

Nature of the Study

The purpose of this qualitative descriptive phenomenological study was to identify the factors that affect expatriate-teacher turnover in the international school industry of China. Based on the explanation by Giorgi (2009), the qualitative descriptive phenomenological method is a suitable research method for this study, because the method recognizes research participants as historical beings with experiences as part of their constitutional framework. The qualitative descriptive phenomenological method is capable of capturing several realities, such as non-sensorial activities. The method can be distinguished from the empirical study because the descriptive phenomenological study is comprehensive, it acknowledges certain experiential realities that empirical study does not acknowledge, and these experiential realities can accurately be described in the phenomenological study (Giorgi, Giorgi, & Morley, 2017).

Using this descriptive phenomenological method, I researched the lived-experiences of my research participants from the international school industry of China, who were current and former expatriate-teachers in what Poole (2018) noted as the Type C international school industry of China. I collected data via online video interviews, to ascertain participants' experiences and views related to expatriate-teacher turnover and their own career intentions in the international school industry of China, which may lead to uncovering strategies of expatriate-teacher retention in the industry. I conducted an online video interview via Skype or WeChat with each of the research participants, selected via purposeful sampling. Using the narrative analysis technique, I captured the perceptions of research participants about expatriate-teacher turnover during the interviews, which was then coded using NVivo computer-aided data management software. From the codes, I extracted themes and categories that relate to potential causes of attrition, which improved my understanding of the issue and may lead to proposals for solutions.

Definitions

I used the following key terms and definitions in this qualitative study:

Descriptive Phenomenological Study: The investigation of a phenomenon under study in a real-life setting. It is a multidisciplinary research approach that allows a researcher, to empirically study a phenomenon over a stipulated period, in a real-life situation (Giorgi, 2009).

Empiricism: A philosophical theory founded by John Locke, which states that knowledge comes through our sense perception, meaning that all knowledge comes via experience (McLeod, 2008).

Expatriate-employee: A staff member of a multinational organization, sent to live and work in another country, other than the country of the staff member's citizenship, for a specified period (Investopedia, 2018).

Expatriate-teacher: Also known as expat-teacher, a teacher assigned to teach in a school, in another country that is not the country of the expat-teacher's citizenship, for a certain period (Kassar et al., 2015).

Globalization: An ever-growing diversification of businesses, associations, and global free-market, characterized by the mobility of goods, financial investments, and services across national and continental borders (Hay & Marsh, 2016).

International Baccalaureate: An internationally designed academic program for students from ages 3 to 19, comprising of four educational programs that are centered on teaching students to be internationally-minded, and to think critically and independently (IBO, 2019).

International Education: An education system that transcends national boundaries, intending to provide students with the skills and knowledge needed to live life as global citizens (CIS, 2017).

Multinational Organizations: Organizations or businesses with the tendency of performing international trade, investments, information technology, and outsourced

manufacturing in other countries. It is an act of economic integration in the global market (Investopedia, 2017).

Pilot Study: A small-scale preliminary study in qualitative research method to evaluate the feasibility of the study, in terms of time and cost needed for the data collection phase (Bishop & Lexchin, 2013).

Purposeful Sampling: A non-probability sampling technique that is based on the judgment of the researcher (Palinkas, Horwitz, Green, Wisdom, Duan, & Hoagwood, 2013).

Assumptions

Assumptions are aspects of the study that are believed but cannot be demonstrated to be true. I assumed that all my research participants were qualified professionals in their respective employment areas; they all had a clear understanding of the purpose of this study; and they would provide open, honest, and unbiased answers to my interview questions. I ensured that all of my research participants held a minimum of a bachelor's degree in education and that they were qualified and licensed International Baccalaureate (IB) teachers. I also assured my research participants of adequate confidentiality and anonymity of the information I received from them.

By selecting expatriate-teachers as my research participants who had worked in the past 10 years or were currently working in the international school industry of China, I assumed that they had been sufficiently exposed to the cultural, social, and employment challenges in the industry. I also assumed that having lived the experience under study,

my research participants would be able to provide quality and reliable information during the data collection process.

Scope and Delimitations

This study was limited to the international school industry of China, which has been experiencing high turnover rates among expatriate-teachers. I collected data via online video interviews from research participants, who are current and former expatriate-teachers in the international school industry of China in the past 10 years. Expatriate-teacher turnover rate may be similar in international school industries in other regions of the world with many international schools, such as the sub-Saharan African countries as noted by Pitsoe (2012), but my research may not be generalizable outside the international school industry of China.

Limitations

Overall, there were several limitations inherent in descriptive phenomenological qualitative research, because of its dependence on the research skills of the researcher and its time-consuming nature. According to Giorgi (2012), research participants must be able to express their respective thoughts and feelings efficiently on the experiences being studied. If this is difficult for them due to language, age, or health barriers, the validity of data collected from them will be impacted.

This study was limited by the cost of the resources and time needed for this study. It was also limited by my research participants' unwillingness to disclose pertinent information about their employment, in order not to put their employment in jeopardy. In descriptive phenomenological research, the researcher's intrinsic bias is difficult to

determine or detect, and results are statistically not reliable, even with larger sample size. Hence, it is sometimes difficult to produce generalizable data, which may also lead to difficulties in establishing reliability and validity (Giorgi, 1997). In examining the limitations inherent in the descriptive phenomenological research, Moustakas (1994) suggested that some of the limitations of phenomenological studies can be reduced via the application of a Husserlian concept of epoche.

Epoche is where phenomenological researchers are encouraged to set aside their prejudgments, biases, and preconceived ideas about the phenomenon under study, before data analysis (Moustakas, 1994). Creating the epoche is a very important step in descriptive phenomenological studies. This is because it allows the researcher to distinguish those personally held intrinsic elements that he or she is carrying into data collection and analysis, thereby helping to separate the researcher's views from that of the experience he or she has while relating with research participants because no phenomenological study can be considered valid if some sense of phenomenological reduction is not well articulated and applied (Giorgi, 1997).

Significance of the Study

Significance to Theory

This study may fill the gap in the knowledge of the problem of expatriate-teacher turnover, by focusing on expatriate-teacher retention in the international school industry of China. This study is significant in that it makes an original contribution to the theoretical literature on advancing knowledge and a deeper understanding of expatriate-teacher turnover on the international school industry of China, and to contribute original

qualitative data to the study's conceptual framework. This research may be beneficial not only to the human resource managers in the international schools but may also provide stability for students in the international schools in China. Ronfeldt (2011), Chris (2016) and Kloss (2013) noted that teacher turnover harms student performances in schools. Hence, identifying the causes of expatriate-teacher turnover may help human resource managers reduce expatriate-teacher turnover in the international schools in China, which will, by extension, enhance student performance positively, maintain human resource funding for these schools, and create a more stable organizational environment.

Significance to Practice

The objective of this study was to understand the perceptions of expatriate-employees in China regarding turnover in the international school industry of China. In a study of workgroup salary dispersion and turnover intention in China, He et al. (2015) reported that employee turnover is a huge problem in China, because the replacement cost associated with hiring, selecting, relocation, and training of an expatriate-employee is high, and in some cases, may lead to constant human resource budget deficit in multinational organizations. In practice, my research could help human resource managers restructure their human resource practices, to reduce expatriate-employee turnover in their respective organizations. Research was needed because the rapid economic growth in China, the huge middle class of Chinese families, and expatriate families living and working in China have a continuing and increasing demand for international education for their school-aged children (Suen & Bing, 2016); yet, the significant turnover in teachers inhibits the growth needed to sustain the demand.

Ma and Trigo (2012) noted that since 2008, Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) in China has risen to approximately 92.4 billion US dollars, which has significantly boosted the quest for expatriate talents among multinational companies in China. This invariably buttresses the importance of implementing appropriate human resources strategies of employee retention, not only because it is expensive to hire and train new employees, but because there is a growing high demand among international businesses in China to employ expatriate talents. Soundarapandiyam and Ganesh (2015) noted that when appropriate employee retention strategies are implemented in organizations, in practice, employee work morale is improved, organizational effectiveness, and productivity is enhanced.

Significance to Social Change

Any human resource strategy that will enhance the academic and social wellbeing of students in the international school industry of China is regarded as a positive social change strategy. Chris (2016) noted that students in schools with low teacher turnover are confident, stable, and perform better academically than those in schools with high teacher turnover. This is because teacher turnover harms student's performances.

The mission statement of the international school industry is to create educational programs that will develop students who will become global citizens. They also aim at developing lifelong learners, who will promote intercultural understanding and mutual respect among people in the world (International Baccalaureate Organization, 2017). My study is significant because it may uncover the causes of expatriate-teacher turnover that will help international schools in China. Appropriate strategies to combat expatriate-

teacher turnover in the industry may also help to maintain a stable and closely-knit staff community in these schools, which is vital to the achievement of the long-term organizational goals of the international schools in China (Soundarapandiyan & Ganesh, 2015).

Summary and Transition

In this research, the focus was on the international school industry of China, with special emphasis on the looming effects of expatriate-teacher turnover in the industry. Limited scholarly research on the problem of expatriate-teacher turnover in the international school industry of China exists. As a phenomenon that has been happening over the past 2 decades with no known scholarly research done on it, I constructed a research question that may help uncover the factors affecting expatriate-teacher attrition, through a phenomenological qualitative method.

Chapter 1 was a concise review of the main elements of the research and serves as the framework to build the other chapters. With Poole's (2019) concept of internationalized schools in China and Odland and Ruzicka's (2009) concept of teacher turnover in international schools, I established the conceptual framework for the study. I wrote about my assumptions for the study, the scope, and the limitations of this study.

In Chapter 2, I will discuss the concepts of internationalized schools and teacher turnover; I explain the rationale for this study, with special emphasis on the main issues that could lead to expatriate-teacher turnover in schools. I discuss the effects of expatriate-teacher turnover in the international school industry of China and the potential

contribution to positive social change when appropriate expatriate-teacher retention strategies are employed in the industry in Chapter 2

Chapter 2: Literature Review

The purpose of this qualitative descriptive phenomenological study was to identify the factors that affect expatriate-teacher turnover in the international education industry of China. The research was needed because teacher turnover systematically disrupts a school's social trust, resources, and support for students (Paul et al., 2014). In his study of teacher's autonomy and turnover in charter schools, Chris (2014) reported that teacher turnover creates negative consequences for students' education in many ways, especially students from low-income families.

Inabinett and Ballaro (2014) studied how organizations can reduce employee turnover by taking necessary steps to match employees' values with corporate values. They reported that employees are more likely to stay longer in their jobs if job assignments enhance self-fulfillment. Kassar et al. (2015), in a study of the effects of cross-cultural trainings on expatriate employees, ascertained through questionnaires distributed to expatriate employees of 10 different multinational companies, located in India, England, Finland, Mexico, and Lebanon, that the culture shock and the nostalgic feelings associated with expatriation can lead to employee dissatisfaction, underperformance, and turnover, if appropriate organizational trainings are not provided to new expatriates. Although these two studies are indicative of the research into employee turnover, it was apparent that there is a lack of research specifically oriented toward the factors that affect expatriate-teacher turnover in the international education industry of China.

The objective of this chapter is to critically analyze current relevant literature and research on expatriate-teacher turnover and its effects on international schools. I identify a gap in the scholarly research on this phenomenon in the international school industry of China. I examine in detail the concepts of internationalized schools and teacher turnover to ascertain factors that cause an expatriate-teacher turnover. I examine current scholarly research on teacher turnover and retention strategies in the education industry.

My literature search strategy is one of the major sections of this chapter. This section will showcase list of accessed library databases and the search engines that I used. I list key search terminologies and a combination of search terms in this section. In this chapter, I also examine in detail the conceptual framework of the research.

Literature Search Strategy

I found literature for this analysis via a comprehensive online search method. I searched in detail, various combination of major keywords and phrases: *descriptive phenomenological research method, employee turnover, expatriate-teacher turnover, international school industry of China, perspectives of expatriate-teachers in China, employee retention strategies, globalization, World Trade Organization, expatriation in China, behaviorism, internationalized schools in China, Type C schools in China, teacher mobility between schools, effects of teacher-turnover in schools, and multinational companies in China.*

I mostly used Walden University's online library Business Complete database. In this online university library, I searched the phrases and key terms on databases such as the Emerald Insight, SAGE Journals, ScienceDirect, ProQuest Central, and Academic

Search Complete. I also searched Google Scholar for relevant peer-reviewed articles on the key terms mentioned above.

Conceptual Framework

This qualitative descriptive phenomenological study was framed by two key concepts that focus on expatriate-teacher turnover and the management of expatriate-teachers in the international school industry of China: Poole's (2018) concept of *internationalized* schools in China and Odland and Ruzicka's (2009) concept of teacher turnover in international schools.

The Internationalized Schools in China

According to Poole (2018), within the context of this study, an *internationalized* school in China is defined as a local Chinese school that follows the Chinese national curriculum, by observing several Chinese national ceremonies, such as the flag-raising ceremony and the Chinese national anthem ceremony. These schools also offer some form of international curricula, such as the International Baccalaureate (IB) and the International General Certificate of Secondary Education (IGCSE) curriculums. Hayden (2011) noted that internationalized schools in China are new hybrid forms of schools that are generally referred to as Type C non-traditional international schools.

Pearce (2013) noted that scholarly research on Type C schools in China is limited because Type C schools are relatively new in nature. Building on the works of Bunnell et al. (2016) and Bunnell and Fertig (2016), Poole (2018) noted that Type C schools in China can only gain international legitimacy as international schools if they embody the characteristics of Type A schools. According to Hayden and Thompson (2013) and

Hayden (2016), Type A traditional international schools started in the 19th century, with the establishment of the International School of Geneva and the Yokohama International School in 1924, designated to cater to the children of global expatriates, and a direct response to pragmatic market demand.

According to Hayden (2006), the philosophy of Type A schools was based on Kurt Hahn's vision of promoting international understanding and peace via education. Hayden and Thompson (2013) noted that Type A schools were created to bring young people together, to develop greater empathy among one another, to foster intercultural awareness, and to curtail some of the world's problems stemming from cultural misunderstandings, hatred, and violence. Type C schools in China are a recent phenomenon and are emerging in part due to globalization. The affluent Chinese families consider the international education curricula available in the Type C schools as superior to their national curriculum because the international education curricula provide adequate means of securing a competitive advantage for their children in a global stage (Hayden, 2016).

Poole (2018) noted that the internationalization of a Chinese local school means that a big part of the teaching faculty will be made up of international teachers, who will teach international curricula in a Chinese context. Poole's findings of the legitimacy of the Type C international schools in China remain problematic and highly contested in nature, because each group of stakeholder he interviewed in his study, provided unique perceptions on the Type C schools, but most of the expatriate-teachers identified the Type C schools in China as international schools because, according to the International

Council of Schools (ISC), the only thing needed to make a national or local Chinese school to become an international school is for that school to offer an international curriculum that is taught in English.

Teacher Turnover in International Schools

According to Odland and Ruzicka (2009), one of the key aspects of the teacher retention issue is that of teacher mobility between schools in a school system. Hayden and Thompson (1998) and Skinner (1998) noted that expatriate-teacher recruitment in international schools is expensive, because of several factors associated with expatriate-teacher employment, such as relocation, housing, and living expenses. Therefore, it is important to understand why some teachers will choose to leave their employment at the end of their teaching contracts, instead of extending their contracts. As Paul et al. (2014) reported, teacher turnover systematically disrupts a school's social trust, resources, and support for students.

Bunnell (2016) extended Standing's (2011) thesis on the term *precariat*, associated with temporary and seasonal expatriate workers in the 1980s. Standing suggested a need for a model of occupational citizenship, to address the precariat nature of expatriate workers, referred to as urban nomads without employment stability. Bunnell agreed with Standing that teaching overseas as an expatriate is a precarious situation with enormous risks and pitfalls.

Bunnell, Fertig, and James (2016) noted that the international school industry has continued to expand, with an estimated number of 4.2 million children from various economic and social backgrounds attending these schools worldwide. According to

Bunnell (2016), the exponential growth of international schools has been overlooked, with an estimated increment of half a million educators and 10,000 English-medium schools in non-English speaking countries expected by 2022. Yet, the international school industry has remained largely uninspected and unregulated.

Odland and Ruzicka (2009) noted that scholarly research examining the factors associated with teacher turnover in the international school industry is limited. Hardman's (2001) studies with 30 expatriate-teachers from international schools in Tanzania, Indonesia, Egypt, and Argentina revealed that most of the research participants claimed that professional advancement, happy work environment, and a strong sense of job security are key factors that could influence them to stay in a school beyond the duration of their initial employment contract. Odland and Ruzicka pointed out that international schools are highly independent organizations, though some of them are affiliated with accreditation organizations such as the European Council of International Schools (ECIS), the International Baccalaureate Organization (IBO), and the Council of International Schools (CIS), these affiliations and connections are by choice, devoid of any national requirement.

The capacity to track teacher movement in the international school industry, from school to school is deeply limited. Data portraying the problem of teacher turnover in the international school industry is also not complete, but the problem is well recognized in international schools (Cambridge, 1998; Fink, 2001; Gillies, 2001). Any good strategy employed to address the issues that push away expatriate-teachers in international schools

prematurely, or at the expiration of their initial contract is certain to make a positive impact on student's wellbeing (Odland & Ruzicka, 2009).

Literature Review

This qualitative phenomenological study was aimed at identifying factors that affect expatriate-teacher turnover in the international school industry of China. This literature review is a critical analysis of the current research on the topic, organized into the major subtopics of the differences between public schools and international schools in China, the academic program or curriculum in the international schools in China, the growth and expansion of the international school industry of China, the importance of an expatriate adjustment program in the international school industry, and the research methodology.

The Differences Between the Public and International Schools in China

Poole (2018) explored the identities of several schools in China, by investigating them through the perceptions of both Chinese and expatriate teachers in Shanghai. In his review of Hayden's (2016) work on the international school industry of China, Poole identified three identity levels that can be used to recognize the *internationalized* schools in China: the *rhetorical level*, the *curricula level*, and the *lived level*.

Poole's (2018) research on Type C schools in China is a critical review of Hayden's (2016) work on the classification of schools in China based on a tripartite typology. Building on this framework, Poole's deductive and inductive reasoning on the tripartite typology of schools in China was captured in the three research questions below:

1. What is the school's rhetorical identity?
2. How is this identity reinforced by the curriculum?
3. How do stakeholders perceive the school's identity?

Poole (2018) addressed most of the research questions by collecting data from expatriate-teachers and Chinese teachers in the schools in the city of Shanghai. Data were also collected from school documents, such as newsletters, marketing brochures, and Poole's personal experiences as a teacher in one of the schools. Applying his adopted ontological levels in his data analysis, Poole's first level, the *rhetorical*, is used to explore a school's identity as articulated in their respective school websites, published materials, and marketing flyers. The second level, the *curricular*, was used to investigate the school's identity, by looking at the curriculum offered in the school and the schools' value systems. The third level, the *lived*, is used to understand the schools' identity from the perspectives of both expatriate-teachers and Chinese teachers who are working in these schools. These ontological levels are important in identifying schools in China that belong to the Type C or *internationalized* schools.

One of the effects of globalization in China in the past 2 decades is the proliferation of schools that cater to the various needs of residents of China. Hence, the increase in the number of schools in China that have tagged themselves as international schools has triggered considerable confusion and the need to define what an international school consists of. This has become complex and contentious among researchers (Hayden, 2011). According to Poole (2018), the need to cater to children of expatriates in China gave rise to a new hybrid of school that caters to not only children of expatriates in

China but also children of affluent Chinese families. These schools were generally referred to in China as Type C schools or the *internationalized* schools.

The International School Council (ISC) (2015) defined a school as international if the curriculum offered in the school is delivered in the English language and the school is located outside an English-speaking country. According to International Baccalaureate Organization (IBO) (2018), a school is considered an international school if its ethos is rooted in universal values, is centered on international mindedness, and its curriculum is committed to educating the whole child to help to make our world a better place. Poole's (2018) study of Type C schools in China fits within the context of the definitions offered by both the ISC and IBO.

Pearce (2013) noted that Type C schools are fairly new and an emerging phenomenon in China with limited scholarly research. But they deserve to be explored in great detail, due to the popularity they have gained in the past 2 decades in China.

Typology of international schools in China. According to Hayden (2016), Type A schools in China are traditional schools that can be traced back to the 19th century, and which were originally designed to cater to the children of mobile expatriates, especially diplomats. Hayden and Thompson (2013) reported that the Type A schools were not created to pragmatically respond to market demands, but rather on ideological purposes, such as promoting intercultural understanding and bridging cultural divides caused by the cold war, fostering unity between expatriate children and local children, in a bid to curtail cultural misunderstanding, violence, and hatred among young people. The United World

Colleges (UWC) in Hongkong, Thailand, Singapore, and South Africa started in the 1960s are examples of Type A schools (Hayden, 2016).

The Type C school industry in China. Type C schools were established in the early 20th century, mostly because of globalization (Hayden, 2016). Because international education ethos and curriculum are incorporated with international and economic values, most affluent families considered international educational as superior to the educational systems available in their national education system. Hence, international education is better for their children in securing a competitive edge in an era of a more integrated global economy (Hayden & Thompson, 2018).

According to Poole (2018), the emergence of the Type C school industry in China due to globalization in the country in the past 2 decades, fueled the growing dissatisfaction with the Chinese exam-oriented educational system, originally designed to help Chinese children assimilate knowledge, devoid of inquiry. Type C schools provided a gold-standard of education, inquiry-based, international minded-education, and student-centered learning (Poole, 2018). The international educational curriculum offered by Type C international schools such as the International Baccalaureate Diploma Program (IBDP) became a product of market forces, and a growing number of affluent Chinese parents has continued to request for international education for their children, to ensure that they benefit from the fruits of globalization in China, by getting an educational diploma that will function as a passport to top-quality universities around the world (Robinson & Guan, 2012). Walker (2016) noted emphatically that the quest for

international education in China is merely for pragmatic and economic purposes, rather than the acquisition of universal values.

From a phenomenological descriptive perspective, Poole (2018) reported that the data he gathered through interviews with Chinese teachers in Type C schools, revealed that many of them still regard Type C schools as Chinese schools. Irrespective of the international curriculum and culture, most Chinese teachers in China regard every school in China as a Chinese school, due to certain mandatory protocols that all schools in China must follow, such as the observance of the flag-raising ceremony and the Chinese national anthem, which signifies support for the Chinese government.

On the contrary, many of the expatriate-teachers in Type C schools in China perceive the schools like international schools, mostly because the curricula offered in these schools are not Chinese national curricula. In other words, expatriate-teachers' perception of the identity of an international school in China is inextricably based on the curriculum offered in the schools (Poole, 2018). This perception is directly in line with the definition given by the ISC (2015).

Poole (2018) suggested that the existence of Type C schools in China with both expatriate and Chinese faculties should create a great opportunity for hybridity, which incorporates aspects of the local and overseas cultures, to enhance more cohesive and intercultural school culture. Walker (2016) and Poole (2018) agreed that the IB learner profiles are a good framework for constructing internationally oriented school values that also remain faithful to the local context.

Cheng and Feng (2017) investigated the differences between public schools and international schools in China, by comparing their performance in key subjects such as mathematics and English. With data collected between 2010 and 2012 in Shanghai city with about 220 million people and about 20 million school-aged children (NBS, 2010), Cheng and Feng discovered that students in the public schools in China perform better than their counterparts in the international schools, partly because the public schools in China are well funded with the increased subsidies they receive from the Chinese government.

Cheng and Feng (2017) noted that children of expatriates in China can only attend public schools in China if there are extra spaces for them in these schools. In other words, Chinese children are given admission priority, because expatriate children are not entitled to receive government-stipulated free education.

The importance of international schools in China. Roberts (2012) noted that international school education in China is inevitable, because of the estimated 220,000 expatriates living in China. With the economic reforms started in China in 1978, by the Chinese economist Deng Xiaopeng, the surge for both Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) and Sino-Foreign Investments (SFDI) in China has continued to rise. This surge has increased the presence of multinational (MNC) companies in China, with satellite offices and campuses in major Chinese cities, managed by expatriates, which has resulted in the annual economic growth of 20 percent in China (Backman, 2004).

Lu and Zhou (2013) and Lai et al. (2014) studied the academic performance of children in public schools and international schools in Beijing, the capital city of China.

Their respective studies, corroborated Cheng and Feng (2017), indicating that academic achievement is the main difference between the public schools and the international schools in China. Cheng and Feng also noted that due to financial instability, inadequate income, the lack of a clear legal structure, and governmental policy for the international school industry in China, international schools in China are always struggling to maintain their operational budgets and their employment structures.

Lai et al. (2014) noted that the education systems of international schools for migrant and expatriate children in China are facing challenges because the government of China does not always provide clear rules and regulations for them. This is why most international schools in China are known to follow western-oriented educational systems, such as the IB curriculum, the Advanced Placement (AP) curriculum or the International General Certificate of Secondary Education (IGCSE); hence, creating an inevitable need for expatriate-teachers in the international schools in China.

Differences in the studies. There are differences in the research performed between Cheng and Feng (2017) and Lai et al. (2014) on the public and international schools in China. Lai et al. noted that due to economic development and urbanization in China in the past few years, a good proportion of rural dwellers in China have moved to the cities with their families, to search for employment in the industrial sector. Due to their migrant status, it is difficult for them to gain admission to Chinese public schools, which are funded by local governments. Lai et al. noted that international schools for migrants are marginalized, due to lack of support and direction from the government. In contrast, Cheng and Feng reported that international schools are constantly changing the

positive direction, due to support from non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and multinational organizations. Some of these changes are adaptations made in the international school academic programs, the leadership structure, and the faculty.

The Academic Program of the International School Industry of China

Wright and Lee (2014) studied the implications and implementations of western academic curriculums and the IB learner profiles in China. They explored the growth of the international school industry in the past 3 decades and the restrictions implemented by the Chinese government for Chinese citizens not to attend international schools in China. According to Wright and Lee, access to international schools offering western academic curriculums is restricted to a relatively affluent minority of the Chinese population, because of enrollment barriers stipulated by the Chinese government and the relatively high tuition fees in the international schools. In their research, they explored how specific elements of the international education curriculum, such as the Creative, Action, and Service (CAS) program and the IB Learner Profiles program, could help foster intercultural understanding in the Chinese context.

Wright and Lee (2014) revealed that most students in the international schools in China remain in social-economic and cultural isolation in China, due to the incompatibility of the western education systems and the social-economic and cultural systems of China. The analysis of data collected via interviews with international school administrators, teachers, and international school students in Beijing and Shanghai showed that some of the elements of the international school curriculums are meant to provide international school students with rich and theoretical perspectives, to appreciate

and adapt to other cultures, but researchers reported some resistance in the implementation of these international school education components in the Chinese culture.

International baccalaureate (IB). The IB academic curriculum was founded in 1968 by a group of high school teachers in Geneva-Switzerland. The primary objective was to provide an internationally acceptable curriculum that was suitable for university admission around the world. The IB pedagogical framework is inquiry-based learning, which aims to develop critical thinkers, knowledgeable students, and lifelong learners (IBO, 2018). The framework promotes intercultural understanding for students, not as an alternative to a sense of national and tribal identity, but as an essential aspect of globalization and expatriation in our contemporary world.

According to Hill (2012), international mindedness is the overarching construct of the IB curriculum. Hacking et al. (2018) noted that international mindedness is at the core of teaching and learning in IB world schools. In their qualitative study, conducted with nine international schools from seven countries (US, UK, Qatar, Jordan, Indonesia, Finland, and China), chosen via purposeful sampling, Hacking et al. (2018) revealed that the concept of international-mindedness in the IB educational curriculum is culturally and regionally contextualized in the participating international schools. But most of the research participants agreed that the concept of international-mindedness in the IB curriculum is meant to enhance the understanding of interconnectedness and interdependency of our global economy. Because globalization and expatriation have continued to connect people from different regions of our world, IB world schools

reinforce the understanding and the need for students to embrace the virtues of empathy and respect, to be open-minded to acknowledge the unavoidable existence of other perspectives, cultures, and religions.

Wright and Lee (2014) reported that a research team from the University of Hong Kong interviewed several stakeholders in the IB world schools in China (teachers, administrators, parents, and students) to ascertain the extent to which the IB academic program offered in the international schools can help to foster inter-cultural understanding in China. But their analysis revealed that the IB academic curriculum offered in international schools in China is creating a cultural and socio-economic divide between international school students and their host population. This is partly because of the incompatibility of the Chinese education culture and the IB philosophy. This divide is also caused by the fact that Chinese citizens are not allowed admission to international schools in China.

Wright and Lee (2014) studied the effect of the IB curriculum used in the international school industry of China, by exploring the thoughts, perceptions, and lived-experiences of their research participants on how the IB curriculum could promote inter-cultural understanding in China. Most of the research participants from the chosen international schools agreed that the Creativity, Action, and Service (CAS) program, the IB learner profiles, globalization, and intercultural understanding are concepts and phrases that are largely promoted and taught in the international schools in China, both by the faculty and student bodies.

Creativity, action, and service program. The CAS is one of the major components of the IB curriculum that is meant to serve as a physical bridge between the students of the international schools in China and their host communities. The CAS program is a mandatory graduation requirement for every IB student in the international schools in China. It is formally assessed, and it is designed to strengthen interpersonal relationships and commitment between students and their host communities (IBO, 2017).

In the CAS program, international school students are taught to remain engaged with their host communities throughout the IB diploma program, by physically participating in off-campus activities in the communities, such as volunteering in the local church, orphanage, or old people's homes, to enhance and promote healthy living, social wellbeing, eco-friendly programs, and selfless service to humanity. The CAS program offers students enjoyable and challenging experiences, through a personal journey of self-discovery, and collaboration with people in the community. It fosters a great sense of accomplishment, pride, and enjoyment from their work (IBO, 2017).

According to Hayden, Hemmens, McIntosh, Sandoval-Hernandez, and Thompson (2017), the CAS program is inclusive, because it provides an engagement framework between parents, students, and their host communities. Students engage their parents in their community CAS activities because parents continue their parenting role of explaining to their children, their perception of the overall benefits of the CAS program. Hayden et al. (2017) noted that parents of students in the IB world international schools in China agree that the CAS program helps their children to use their extra-curricular times in a valuable manner and serves as an effective goal-setting program. CAS program

activities provide positive changes in the student's behavior, personal disposition, and interpersonal relationships. Students learn how to take up new challenges, to develop independent living skills, and how to persevere in a given task. Students are required to provide continuous and periodic feedback and reflections on all their CAS activities to their respective CAS supervisors, through a structured online portal recommended by the proprietors of the IB curriculum.

A survey conducted by Hayden et al. (2017) to ascertain the impact of the CAS program on IB students showed that most IB students perceive the CAS program as a difficult program, in an already rigorous and challenging academic curriculum. Students also agree that the CAS program is rewarding. 85% of the IB students surveyed pointed out that the service component of the CAS program is the most difficult. 70% agreed that their participation in the CAS program helped them to develop adequate independent living skills and social skills that are vital for life in the university.

The IB academic curriculum offered in the international schools in China is a rigorous, challenging, and balanced program, designed to prepare international school students for successful university life and integration into the wider society as young adults. IB curriculum has as its core, the philosophy of developing a whole child that will be knowledgeable, caring, compassionate, open-minded, and has dispositions that can respect, and tolerate a range of viewpoints from other people (IBO, 2017).

Poole (2017) noted that the IB learner profile is at the center of the IB curriculum because it reinforces the concepts of international-mindedness and global citizenship. Rizvi et al. (2014) and Lai (2014) in a study of how the IB learner profile philosophy is

perceived in different regions of the world, confirmed the subjective absorption and contextualization of the IB learner profile, the discrepancies in the definition of key terms, and the various ways teachers and students around the world apply the IB learner profile in their respective schools, especially in a non-western context. But the overarching understanding of the learner profile is that it is a framework of academic and moral attributes. Wright and Lee (2014) noted that the IB learner profile is centered to foster important non-cognitive skills that are highly relevant in fostering inter-culturing understanding. The 10 IB learner profiles are intrinsic moral values, which every IB student is expected to imbibe.

According to the IBO (2017), these 10 characteristics are meant to be implemented on a day-to-day basis in the IB program. Wright and Lee (2014) reported that most expatriate-teachers in the international schools in China make daily effort to integrate the 10 IB learner profile into their pedagogical practices, by nurturing the characteristics through their respective subject contents and ways of delivering the contents in their classrooms. As an inquiry-based academic curriculum, students are encouraged to question their preconceived ideas about other cultures, religions, societies, and places. The exposure and brainstorming activities on pre-conceived ideas help to promote the majority of the IB learner profile elements, especially the characteristics of being knowledgeable, open-minded, reflective, balanced, and caring.

Poole (2017) reported that the notion of the IB learner profile characteristics as being western-oriented has prompted several concerns among stakeholders. Researchers such as Chatlos (2015), Lai, Shum, and Zhang (2014), and Wells (2016) noted the need

for international school educators to address the concern from these international school stakeholders, that the 10 IB learner profile characteristics portray and reinforce normative western behaviors, which are sometimes incompatible in non-western cultures and religions.

According to Wells (2016), the learner profile characteristics are not intended to be a yardstick of measuring international students' behaviors, but rather the characteristics are considered as a road map for a life-long journey in the pursuit of intercultural awareness and understanding. Wells (2016) argued that the IB curriculum did not provide any specific framework to measure the application and success of the learner profile attributes, which portrayed a lack of clarity concerning the nomenclature used in the learner profile. This gap leaves the delivery and monitoring of the success of teaching the learner profile characteristics to students to respective international schools, based on the level of trust and professionalism they have for their expatriate-teachers.

The Expansion of International Schools Industry of China

Hacking et al. (2018) noted that China has remained a forerunner in terms of the number of international schools that are opened annually around the world. According to the IBO (2018), between 2003 and 2014, about 64 new international schools offering the IB program were opened in China. Part of the reason for the rapid expansion is the wider opening of the Chinese economy, their membership into the World Trade Organization (WTO), and their relaxation of their strict legislation on international schools. Because the Chinese government understood the importance of the existence of international schools to their economy, KPMG (2010) noted that in 2001 the government reversed the

existing law on foreign investment in China, by allowing the formation of joint Sino-foreign ventures in the international school industry of China, where foreign partners could own the majority of shares.

Statista (2016) reported that China with an estimated population of 1.38 billion people according to 2016 census, has reached 56 percent urbanization in 2015. China's urban population in the past 2 decades is characterized by the development of the middle class, which by extension, doubled the Gross Domestic Product (GDP) per capita between 2008 and 2016. This rapid growth of the middle class was made possible due to the growing number of services, high-tech, and industrial jobs that were outsourced to China, by several multinational companies around the world that are taking advantage of the large urban population and the relatively low minimum wages paid to production and manufacturing workers in China. Also, the growth of the middle class according to Statista (2016) is expected to continue to remain the driver of the Chinese economy.

According to Hacking et al. (2018), the rapid globalization and urbanization that has continued in China in the past 3 decades have heightened the demand for international education that could provide a validated entry route to universities around the world. Brunold-Conesa (2010) and Caspary (2011) reported that the international school academic programs prepare students with the relevant skills, academic knowledge, and the mentality needed to be successful in tertiary institutions around the world.

According to the IBO (2018), a team of researchers from the University of Hong Kong reported that between 2002 and 2012, among the 1,612 students who graduated from 14 respected international schools in China, 71 percent were admitted to the top 500

universities, following the World University Rankings and Times Higher Education University rankings.

Students who graduate from the international schools in China are mostly children of expatriates and students from the Asian descent who are not Chinese citizens. IBO (2018) noted that more than 61 percent of them chose to attend universities in North America. To this effect, Wright and Lee (2014) observed that the international school academic curriculum in China is increasingly perceived as being superior to the Chinese national curricula by several universities in the Asian region and beyond. Interviews with focus groups in the international schools in China with the IB academic curriculum revealed their belief that the IB curriculum help students to develop critical thinking skills and effective communication skills, which minimizes the difficulties of adjusting to higher education academic requirements due to the extensive academic hard work, the rigor, and breadth of the international school IB curriculum (IBO, 2018).

International school student enrollment in China. Wright and Lee (2014) noted that international schools in China mostly have a diverse mixture of nationalities, with students from East Asian countries in the majority. Data obtained from the IBO (2014) indicated that 63 percent of students who enrolled in the IB world international schools in China in 2014 were from the East Asia, 15 percent European students, 14 percent of the students were from North America, four percent from Australia, and four percent from other nationalities. Table 1 shows student nationalities in international IB schools across China in 2014, while Table 2 indicates the number of students from counties in the East Asian counties enrolled in the international IB schools in China.

Inter-cultural understanding. The central vision of most IB International schools in China is the creation of a better, more integrated, and peaceful world via inter-cultural understanding and mutual respect (IBO, 2014). A key strategy of achieving this objective is to physically bridge the divides between students in international schools in China and their host communities. This is the reason why the IB curriculum incorporated several extra-curricular activities, to ensure that international students are given the opportunity of experiential education outside of their classrooms. Wright and Lee (2014) reported that the idea of inter-cultural understanding in the IB world schools in China means that students are constantly taught to promote respect for cultural diversity, human rights, solidarity among people, and friendships.

Table 1

IBDP Students by Region in China in 2014

| Region | IBDP graduates total | IBDP graduate % |
|---------------|----------------------|-----------------|
| East Asia | 1621 | 63 |
| Europe | 378 | 15 |
| North America | 378 | 15 |
| Australia | 110 | 4 |
| *Others | 4 | 101 |
| Total | 2561 | 100 |

Note. *Including Hong Kong, Malaysia, Vietnam, and the Philippines. Adapted from data collected from the IBO (2018).

Because international school education in China is still only available to foreigners and a few elite Chinese families from relatively high socioeconomic

backgrounds, Wright and Lee (2014) noted that international school students in China still have limited scope and depth on how to adequately develop an inter-cultural understanding with their host communities. According to Pearce (1994), this disparity between international students in China and their host communities could consequently lead to a growing minority of China's population that is educated in a relative cultural bubble.

Table 2

IBDP Students by East Asian Country in China in 2014

| East Asian country | IBDP graduate Total | IBDP graduate % |
|--------------------|---------------------|-----------------|
| China | 760 | 47 |
| South Korea | 352 | 22 |
| Taiwan | 125 | 8 |
| Singapore | 124 | 8 |
| *Others | 260 | 15 |
| Total | 2561 | 100 |

Note. *Including Hong Kong, Malaysia, Vietnam, and Philippines.
Adapted from data collected from the IBO (2018).

Wright and Lee (2014) noted that economic wellbeing is the primary focus of most immigrants and foreigners in China. This means that Sandel's (2012) notion of *skyboxification*, which is a decline of social interaction between people of different backgrounds and cultures, could be the case in China. Again, China is currently a market-based economy, where the money is expected to buy more things that sustain human life, it is possible for people from different socio-economic backgrounds to live in the same city and neighborhood and still live separate lives. According to Heyward (2012), this

lack of inter-cultural understanding between the international students in China and their host communities could undermine the importance of inter-cultural relations and international mindedness.

Wright and Lee (2014) noted that most of the research participants agreed that the IB curriculum was well developed to facilitate inter-cultural understanding among diverse groups of people, by bridging physical, cultural, and socio-economic divides between students and their host communities, but the case in China is different. The current restrictions on the admission of Chinese citizens into the IB international schools in China have continued to hinder and slow the progress of bridging the divides between international students in China and their host communities.

The IB philosophy provides a strong theoretical foundation in the understanding of other cultures. Teachers in these schools are trained to integrate into their pedagogical practices, strategies that will continuously promote the characteristics of inter-cultural awareness and appreciation of perspectives of different people (IBO, 2017). The interviews conducted by Wight and Lee (2014) with students, teachers, and administrators from five elite international schools students in China, provided hidden perceptions of the impact of the IB philosophy in China, which are valuable insights for prospective international school educators, to understand the dilemmas regarding the practical implementation of the IB philosophy in the Chinese cultural and political structures. As a result of this phenomenon, most students in international schools in China appear to remain in physical, socio-economic, and cultural isolation from their counterparts in public schools.

The IB philosophy and conceptualization of the extra-curricular programs in the IB framework are currently seen by IB students in China as a mere vehicle for a successful transition into top-ranking universities around the world. Wright and Lee (2014) concluded their qualitative phenomenological study of the impact of the IB curriculum in promoting inter-cultural understanding in China, by stating that the learner outcome of the IB curriculum that focuses on the development of the whole child as a global citizen might have been incomplete and unwieldy. They recommended standardization and quality control of the IB framework, to be redirected into a new context that will incorporate universal educational values and traditions.

Hacking et al. (2018) in their qualitative study of the concept of international-mindedness and global citizenship ideologies of the IB world international schools, reported that the IB ideologies were built on assumptions and values that may not be relevant for other cultures. Hacking et al. (2018) argued that the IB academic framework in the international school industry of China was constructed with western values. Hence, it lacks authentic international perspectives.

Researchers of the international school industry such as Wright and Lee (2014), Hayward (2017), and Hacking et al. (2018) generally agree that the expansion of the international school industry in the past 3 decades is commendable. The international school industry aims to instill young learners with the skills and understanding necessary to promote sustainable international relations among nations, globalization, and development. International students are also taught to promote social justice and a more equitable, and peaceful world (IBO, 2018). According to Bullock (2011), one of the core

elements of the IB world schools is that it believes that open-mindedness and good attitudes to other cultures can promote learning and bring social advantages to international school students. International school students are said to have wider cosmopolitan attributes and are very adaptable to new environments than their counterparts in national public schools.

University admission and destination. In a study with a quantitative analysis of 1622 university students and qualitative analysis of data collected from students of five international schools in China, Lee and Wright (2016) found out that the IB high school diploma helped students gain admission into the top 50 leading universities around the world. Interview data collected via the mixed method of university students indicated that the IB academic curriculum is challenging and provides a structured framework for international school students to acquire and demonstrate good social and academic skills necessary for university education. The quantitative data from IB international students in China revealed that between 2002 and 2012, the most popular university destination for IB graduate students from China was the United States. The United Kingdom is the second university education for IB graduate students in China. Other popular university destination countries include Canada, Singapore, Australia, and New Zealand. This information buttresses the need for the existence of the international school industry in China because it provides seamless entry to universities around the world for children of expatriates living and working in China (Rensik, 2009).

Lee and Wright (2016) revealed that about 99.5 percent of international school students in China received admission to higher education institutions outside mainland

China. They also noted, therefore, that the IB diploma for international school students in China is a vehicle for entry into top-ranking universities around the world. Researchers such as Lee et al. (2012), Hallinger et al. (2010), and Gehring (2001) reported that most university admission managers in top universities in the world view the IB diploma program as highly rigorous, with stringent assessment and grading system. Most university admission managers agree that IB graduates bring additional skills to university education, acquired from the compulsory extra-curricular activities, built into the IB academic program, such as the CAS program, the Extended Essay (EE), and the Theory of Knowledge (TOK) skills. These unique selling points of the IB program have arguably, made top tier universities to seek to strategically offer admissions to IB graduates because they are not just academically strong, they also possess good behaviors (Khan, 2010).

According to the IBO (2018), the IB academic program is a structured and holistic education curriculum, made possible by the rigorous assessments and external exams. Most of the IB schools in China are well funded because most of the students in these schools are from affluent families, hence, abundant resources and college counselors are readily available in the IB world schools in China, to help students with university applications. Lee and Wright (2016) reported that the presence of college counselors in these schools helps to facilitate the admission of IB graduates to leading universities around the world.

These college counselors project high expectations about university entrance, by offering practical information and guidance, such as question and answer sessions, one-on-one meetings, and university fairs on how to choose the right university and the right course to study. It was noted that in some elite international schools in China, the college counselors arrange trips to prestigious universities for students to have the opportunity to meet with admission officers in those universities and get firsthand information and experience about the university before applying.

International mindedness. Wright and Lee (2014), in their study of the academic program of the international school industry of China, assumed that the students in the participating elite international schools in China were potentially less likely to encounter other students from other cultural backgrounds more regularly than students in the non-elite international IB world schools. All the research participating schools were IB world schools, hence the researchers assumed that the concept of international-mindedness as a key concept in the IB curriculum, will portray a certain level of homogeneity among these schools, and will help the students in the schools to embrace and promote intercultural awareness within and beyond their schools (Hallinger, Walker, & Lee, 2010). The core philosophy of the IB curriculum is to develop individuals who will create a better and more peaceful world, through intercultural understanding and open-mindedness (IBO, 2014).

Wright and Lee (2014) assumed that it is highly relevant in education philosophy for IB world schools to ensure that the physical, socio-economic, and cultural divides between IB students and their host nations are bridged. Despite this assumption of Wright and Lee (2014), Brunold-Conesa (2010), Tarc (2009), and Resnik (2009) argued that the

popularity of the IB curriculum in the international schools are primarily because it is in the business of offering high school diplomas, that has gained worldwide recognition, helped IB graduates gain admission into top-ranking universities, and transition to high paying jobs, and not necessarily the philosophy of promoting inter-cultural understanding, international mindedness, mending cultural divides, and globalization. Resnik (2009) noted that it is not feasible to mend the physical, socio-economic, and cultural divides because there are conflicting views on how to reconcile this between IB elite international school students in China and their host nation, with the practical objective of understanding and appreciating the cultural differences between them and their host nation.

Resnik (2009) maintained that the programs in the international IB world school, especially the Creative, Action, and Service (CAS) program, the 10 IB learner profile program: caring, knowledgeable, inquiring, courageous, balanced, reflective, principled, communicators, thinkers, and open-minded (IBO, 2018) could instill cosmopolitan values in the students, but they are primarily meant to provide a seamless transition to our contemporary globalized business environment. The idea of promoting inter-cultural understanding and open-mindedness in international schools in China is more relevant as career development for these students, rather than corporation, solidarity, and cultural understanding of host communities in China.

The Importance of an Expatriate Training Program in the International School Industry

Inabinett and Ballaro (2014) and Kassari et al. (2015) corroborated with the studies of researchers such as McNulthy (2015); Schuler, Jackson Tarque (2011); and

Selmar (2014) on the need for multinational organizational leaders to ensure that adequate training is offered to new expatriates before their assignments overseas.

McNulty (2015) noted that a growing body of anecdotal research and evidence suggests that family concern and marriage are the top reasons for expatriate employment turnover and refusal. Inabinett and Ballaro stated that the onus is on the leadership of global companies to ensure that adequate measures are taken to manage employee adjustments overseas. This is because of the consequences of family and marriage problems that can emanate from inadequate adjustment in a foreign country are divorce, bankruptcy, alienation from siblings and children, depression, and suicide (McNulty, 2015).

Poole's (2019) investigation on expatriate-teachers in China as international precariat, revealed that expatriate-teachers are regarded as a class of people living without adequate job security, urban nomads, and people with less access to pension and healthcare privileges in the country they live. Bunnell (2016) went further to buttress the point that expatriate-teachers are global precariat, with little or no employment stability, by offering anecdotal evidence of a real-life incident of an expatriate Chemistry teacher who was dismissed from his job in an international school in Tibet, because he was purportedly insulting the Islamic religion.

Odland and Ruzucka's (2009) definition of teacher turnover is teacher mobility between schools in a school system. The authors explained the concept of teacher turnover as a situation where a significant number of teachers' exit from a school, impacting the school negatively in different ways. A high rate of teacher turnover harms students' achievement, because teachers make the most influence on students, addressing the reasons why teachers are dissatisfied with their jobs is important for school

effectiveness and important in stemming a country's teacher shortage crisis (Carver-Thomas and Darlling-Harmmond (2017).

Sharma and Jain (2013) studied organizational culture and its impact on employees' behavior. According to them, every organization has its own distinct culture, which could be long-held informal or formal traditions and systems, passed on from past leaders to current leaders, which influence employee turnover and retention rates in organizations. According to Odland and Ruzucka (2009), the international school industry's progress and stability depend heavily on its leadership.

It is the responsibility of international school administrators to address any issues that push teachers away. Without effective human resource management strategies in the industry, its progressive objectives stall, and it reverts to the status quo. According to Morrison (2017), a leader's ability to develop people in the international school industry in turn, enhance their competitiveness in the industry, help to build strong employee teams, and foster employee employment longevity.

Molinsky and Hahn (2016) noted that overseas employment can be a rewarding way to leverage the benefits of a global economy and globalization. This is because it provides people an opportunity to evolve individually in their respective employment in international organizations, through proper management of their work lives. However, Poole (2019) reported that there is evidence of destructive leadership, nepotism, and passport retention of expatriate-teachers in some international schools in Asia, which supports the assertion that expatriate-teachers are increasingly becoming part of a global education precariat. This precarity is also attributed to a lack of regulation and policies for international schools by local governments.

Data gathered via interviews with expatriate-teachers in China by Poole (2019) on the topic of expatriate-teachers as international precariat, highlighted identity confusion, lack of representation, and lack of financial security among these expatriate-teachers in China. On a positive note, some of the expatriate-teachers in China perceive their international teaching assignment as an ‘adventure’, this is true for some expatriate-teachers who feel that they have accrued enough economic and cultural capital, to feel secure about their career as international educators.

This perception coincides with Standing's (2011) notion that being part of the precariat can be very empowering because the precarious experience can be converted into a professional experience or what is termed by Poole (2019) as cross-cultural capital. Poole, therefore, noted that the argument on expatriate-teachers as global education precariat is not homogenous in nature, but rather comprised of a sub-group of expatriate teachers, whose primary reason of teaching overseas is due to economic reasons.

Odland and Ruzucka (2009), in their investigation of teacher turnover in international schools in Tanzania, Indonesia, Egypt, and Argentina, revealed three factors; working conditions, good financial incentives, and adequate leadership, as factors that are likely to help reduced teacher turnover in those countries. Research participants revealed that a happy working climate in international schools might influence them to stay beyond their initial employment contracts. The happy working climate was defined as the feeling of being respected and appreciated by one’s colleagues, a sense of job security, and strong professional interpersonal relationships with colleagues and students.

Financial incentives were noted as the second factor that could lead to teacher retention in the international schools in the stated countries, and adequate administrative

leadership being the third factor that could lead to teacher retention in the international schools in the stated countries. The consensus in the literature suggests that teacher turnover in international schools is at an unhealthy range, because of the high cost of replacing teachers and the unsustainable annual human resource budgets in some of the international schools (Odland & Ruzucka, 2009).

Research Methodology

Wright and Lee (2014) employed the phenomenological qualitative research method in a study of the academic curriculum in the international school industry of China and its effects on enhancing intercultural understanding in China. The researchers gathered data from 27 administrators, teachers, and students in international schools in China. Interviews were conducted via a semi-structured interview process, to understand the lived-experiences of students, teachers, and administrators in the participating international schools (Giorgi, 2009).

Wright and Lee's (2014) interview questions were focused on the components of the IB curriculum, such as the IB learner profiles and pedagogy, the teaching and learning strategies, and the university transition programs. The research was conducted via a purposeful sampling method, with elite international schools in Beijing and Shanghai, the two most populous cities in China. The schools chosen in these cities were relatively elite in economic terms, in the context of China, and were therefore chosen as good prototypes of international schools that are suitable to explore, to understand the capacity of the IB curriculum to promote inter-cultural understanding between international school students in China and their host nation. Wright and Lee conducted the interviews simultaneously with the participating schools because they believed that two interviewers were necessary

to ensure coverage of main issues and to ensure that unnecessary digressions from core issues were curtailed.

The strategy of employing two interviewers helped the research team to cross-check their interview questions, to ensure that questions are relevant to address the research question of understanding the impact of the academic curriculum in the international schools in China on inter-cultural understanding in China. This strategy also helped the research team to designate an interviewer to be asking impromptu questions, while the other interviewer maintained stipulated interview protocol. The research team ensured that all the research participants are given consent forms before the interviews and ensured that the consent forms were signed and returned before the interview dates. The research team recorded all the interviews, which was later analyzed using a computer-aided data management and analysis program.

An alternative to the phenomenological qualitative research method employed by Wright and Lee (2014) is the ethnographic qualitative research method, which involves the study of people's actions in their natural settings. Ethnographic research method typically entails the researcher being present with the research participants for an extended period, to systematically collect data about daily activities. Just like the phenomenological qualitative studies, ethnographic research data collection strategies are observations and interviews, but the phenomenological qualitative research method is the most suitable method for this kind of research because the ethnographic research method is time-consuming. Hence, it will not fit within the stipulated timeframe for a doctoral dissertation. Another drawback is that the boundary between the researcher and the

research participants is generally unclear, and may lead to ethical violations (Wilson, 2006).

Gap in the Literature

The many critical studies on the international school industry of China show the importance of the international school industry in our contemporary global economy and international diplomacy. But the focus of these studies was not on the strategies of expatriate-teacher retention in the international school industry of China. McNulty (2015), Kassir et al. (2015), Schuler, Jackson, and Tarque (2011), and Selmer (2004), studied employee management in multicultural organizational settings, provided different views on employee adjustments overseas, strategies of supporting overseas assignment, and managing global talents. Their respective qualitative studies were western-oriented and left a gap in scholarly research on attrition in the international school industry of China. For the most part, the issue of public and international schools in China received in-depth and rich analysis in the studies of Cheng and Feng (2017), Lu and Zhou (2013), and Lai, Liu, Luo, Zhang, Ma, Bai, Sharbono and Rozelle (2014). However, none of these studies addressed the factors that affect expatriate-teacher turnover in the international school industry of China.

It is very important to narrow this gap, as globalization and expatriation have become vital to our global economy and well-being. The International School Sector (2017) intelligence research, reported that the international school industry in China has increased to about 600 schools since the past 10 years, because most Chinese parents have continued to demand for internationally oriented education for their children, as a way to ensure that their children are well prepared in both the Chinese and western

cultures. As Gaskell (2017) reported, a well-rounded education that incorporated both the western and Chinese curriculums is needed to sustain both the Chinese and world economies in this 21st century. It is also crucial to study this phenomenon, because early childhood education, primary education, and secondary education are the backbones and foundations of human civilization. White, Prentice, and Perlman (2015) noted that neuroscientific research showed that early childhood education of young people is critical to their overall development in life, because the experiences of students at their early educational stages, can make a remarkable impact on their future lives as adults and throughout their lifetimes. Good strategies of employee retention in the international school industry of China might help to sustain the rapid growth of the industry, improve both the Chinese and world economies and the overall well-being of students in the international schools in China.

The issue of international education in China has also received considerable attention from both domestic and international researchers, including Wright and Lee (2014), Hacking et al. (2018), Cheng and Feng (2017), Lu and Zhou (2013), and Lai et al. (2014). These studies have provided rich background information on the international school industry of China from various dimensions and perspectives. Most of the studies focused on academic programs and curricula offered in international schools and their impact on Chinese culture and politics. However, none of them provided information about expatriate-teacher turnover in the international school industry of China.

Summary and Conclusion

From the synthesis of the literature, it seems that promoting the alignment of organizational cultures and values with employees' values is a major employee retention

strategy (Mendes, Gomes, & Romao, 2015; Inabinett & Ballaro, 2014; Kassar et al., 2015). Regarding employees as key stakeholders in major organizational decisions, it may help to strengthen and consolidate their relationship with their organizations, which enhances organizational productivity in the long run (Mendes et al., 2015). The unavoidable need to adapt to new cultures, weather, language, and a new business environment can be overwhelming to many expatriates. Researchers of workforce turnover also found that appropriate professional training are necessary strategies for reducing cultural shocks that are associated with new employment overseas (Kassar et al., 2015).

Researchers such as Kloss (2013); Paul et al. (2014); Schiman (2015); and Ronfeldt et al. (2011), noted that negative employee turnover affects the smooth running of an organization, by destabilizing employee teams, making organizational human resource budgets unsustainable, and by reducing work output. But there is no scholarly research on the impact of expatriate-teacher turnover in the international school industry of China. My study will fill a gap in the literature by investigating the causes of expatriate-teacher turnover in the international school industry of China. It also extends the knowledge of expatriate-teacher attrition and retention in the discipline of management. In addition to destabilizing employee teams and maximizing human resource budgets in the international school industry, Huaichuan, Miao, and Alan (2017) and Vlad, Arno, and Charles (2015) noted the importance of expatriation to our global economy and its trickle effects on the economies of individual nations of the world.

In Chapter 3, I provide a comprehensive description of the methodology I used in this research. This will include sections that describe my research participant selection,

the qualitative phenomenological research design, and my rationale for employing this specific design. I describe my sampling and population processes, data collection methods, and data analysis using both hand-coding and NVivo. Chapter 3 also includes a section that describe issues related to the trustworthiness, credibility, and dependability of this study.

Chapter 3: Research Method

Despite some awareness of the issue in the literature, there is a gap in the research regarding expatriate-teacher turnover in the international education industry of China. As noted by Poole (2018) the Type C international school industry of China is a recent phenomenon with little research in scholarly literature, hence, the research problem was that there is a lack of knowledge and understanding about the factors that cause expatriate-teacher turnover in the international school industry of China.

The purpose of this descriptive qualitative phenomenological study was to identify the factors that affect expatriate-teacher turnover in the international education industry of China. The research was needed and may benefit the international school industry because teacher turnover systematically disrupts a school's social trust, resources, and support for students (Paul et al., 2014). Expatriate-teacher turnover is the central concept of this phenomenon. Chris (2014) reported that teacher turnover creates negative consequences for students' education in many ways, especially students from low-income families.

Chapter 3 includes an overview and description of the research tradition and design. It also includes the rationale for the chosen research tradition. This chapter includes a discussion about the sampling method, the population, data collection processes, instruments, and data analysis.

Research Design and Rationale

The research question was, what are the lived-experiences that expatriate-teachers have regarding causes of turnover and their career intentions in the international school industry of China?

According to Eriksson and Kovalainen (2008), qualitative research methodology involves the understanding and interpretation of socially constructed reality, embedded with social and cultural meanings. The collection of data and analysis in qualitative research considers the sensitive nature of the social, religious, and cultural context, to understand holistically, the phenomenon under study.

A qualitative phenomenological research method was appropriate for this research because it allows a researcher to explore a given phenomenon from the research participants' perspectives (Giorgi, 2009) by exploring and analyzing their lived-experiences in the international school industry of China. Other possible research methods would have been less effective, such as the case study method, which according to the Center for Innovative and Research Technology (2018), narrowly focuses on the subject of study, combining both objective, and subjective data to achieve understanding. Yin (2009) noted that the case study method lacks systematic procedure, because of the absence of a methodological guideline. This lack of methodological rigor as reported by Maoz (2002) absolves the researcher of any kind of methodological consideration, which impacts on the objectivity of the research findings, and the external validity.

The ethnography research method is an anthropological exploration of people's lives and cultures, which often involves a researcher being part of the research group or subject of research, to understand the perspectives of the research participants (Hammersley & Atkinson, 2007). According to Laukkanen and Eriksson (2013), the ethnography research method is complex, because it needs an extensive amount of time to build trust and rapport with the research participant to facilitate comprehensive and honest discourse.

Nurani (2008) noted that ethnographic researchers often struggle to avoid the temptation of imposing both conceptual and theoretical frameworks on empirical data. In other words, ethnographers are often influenced by their cultural bias or ignorance, which can negatively affect the way they study and interact with research participants. This is common in ethnographic researches, especially when the religious, cultural, and political views of the researcher clash with that of the research participants.

The Role of the Researcher

According to Giorgi (2009), the role of the researcher in qualitative phenomenological research is to ensure that the phenomenological concepts of parts are kept intact throughout the study, that research participants' voices are kept in the research as much as possible, and that no deception is involved in getting data in its real-world context. Moustakas (1994) noted that perception should be the only primary source of knowledge in descriptive phenomenological studies. Perceptions are to be trusted, to be vested totally in what is offered by the research participants, without prejudice or bias. Van Manen (2014) noted that phenomenological researchers need to have the spirit of doing phenomenology on the phenomena. This entails asking probing questions to engage research participants into a deeper level of discussion, creating a picture based on relevant ideas and theories from existing literature and employing a reflective approach to writing, which incorporates our whole sensual and sentient embodied being.

Denzin and Lincoln (2003) reported that a qualitative researcher is like an instrument for data collection. It is the role of the qualitative researcher, to collect data from the research participants devoid of personally held intrinsic biases, prejudices, and assumptions. The relationship with research participants should be professional and

cordial. The question of subjectivity and relativity are often problematic in qualitative studies, because of the concern that qualitative data can be distorted or manipulated during the analytical stage. Kvale (1996) and Brinkmann and Kvale (2005) reported an obvious power imbalance between the researcher and the research participants, which may lead to distrust and inaccurate account of lived-experiences, but a researcher's caring attitude, empathy, and the willingness to present an atmosphere of equality between the researcher and the researched may help to conceal power differences and imbalances during qualitative research interviews and observations.

According to Sanjari, Bahramnezhad, Fomani, Shoghi, and Cheraghi (2014), the nature of qualitative research method interactions between the researcher and the researched makes it ethically challenging for the researcher. There are ethical considerations in all stages of qualitative research, in the aspects of anonymity, confidentiality, and informed consent. In conducting this research, I adhered to the ethical and moral standard stipulated by Walden University Institutional Review Board (IRB). My personally held intrinsic biases were managed by the use of NVivo, to analyze my data for themes and keywords. Politic and Beck (2014) reported that a qualitative researcher is an integral part of the whole study and even the final product. Hence, I was able to be transparent and reflective about my preconceptions, analytical focus, and relationship dynamics.

Having been working in the international school industry in the past few years, most of my research participants were current and former colleagues. My role as a researcher was to collect data via interviews, questionnaires, and surveys on their respective perspectives on expatriate-teacher turnover in the international school industry

of China. The rationale was to understand the causes of the looming expatriate-teacher turnover in the industry and the possible strategies of retention. I ensured that appropriate consent forms were signed, with confidentiality, and anonymity maintained adequately, in order not to put the employments of my research participants in jeopardy.

Methodology

My study of the factors that affect expatriate-teacher turnover in the international school industry of China followed the qualitative descriptive phenomenological approach. I developed a complete and detailed description of my observations, circumstances, and context of events, as portrayed by my research participants. According to Giorgi (2009), the descriptive phenomenological method is well suited for the objective of my research because objects of consciousness must be considered to understand the whole experience in a natural context and exactly the way it was lived by the research participants.

In the phenomenological research approach according to Giorgi (2012), the researcher aims to understand the lived-experience of the research participants through interviews. The descriptive phenomenological method explores the lived-experiences of research participants by focusing on their perspective in a realistic manner (Giorgi, 2009). The objective of my research was to understand the factors that affect expatriate-teacher turnover and possible strategies of retention in the international school industry of China.

The descriptive phenomenological research method was the appropriate method for this study, Giorgi (2012) noted that phenomenological studies are usually descriptive, embedded with interpretations of data collected about the subjects of the research while studying research participants in their natural environments. The Center for Innovation

Research and Training (CIRT) (2018) noted that the primary goal of descriptive phenomenological research is to describe the lived-experiences of research participants. This does not include hypotheses or preconceived ideas about the subjects. To encourage tension-free participation from research participants, phenomenological researchers usually employ the semi-structured interview method, which does not follow a formalized list of questions but allows open-ended questions and follow-up questions. The method employs one-on-one interviews, focus meetings, and observations as data collection techniques (Wilson, 2006).

The descriptive phenomenological research method is a five-step system of research, which provides the lived-context of the research participants, devoid of deception (Giorgi, 2009). This method allows the voice of research participants to be kept in the study, without abstracting their perspectives. Giorgi and Giorgi (2013) noted that in the descriptive phenomenological study, the subjective-psychological perspective of the research participants is the key element that attracts the interest of the researcher.

Giorgi's (2009) modification of the Husserlian phenomenological research method provided a five-step discovery-oriented process that is useful in describing the structure of a psychological phenomenon so that it could be understood in a deeper, holistic and comprehensive level than other research methods mentioned above. Broome (2011) reported that the first step of Giorgi's (2019) five-step phenomenological research method is for the researcher to assume the phenomenological attitude. This typically means 'bracketing', in which the researcher is expected to identify and keep track of any preconceived opinions, beliefs, or perspectives about the subjects being researched. This

helps to ensure that the researcher explores the subjects being studied in an unbiased manner.

The second step requires the researcher to read the entire naïve description provided by the research participants, to get a sense of the whole experience. The third step in the phenomenology study process is the demarcation of ‘meaning units’ within the narrative so that the data can be handled within manageable portions. The fourth step is transforming the meaning units into psychological sensitive descriptive expressions. This is the step involves describing research participants’ experiences from the perspectives of the participants without questioning the reasons behind the experiences (Giorgi, 2009).

The fifth step in the analysis is the synthesis of the general psychological structure (Giorgi, 2009). In this step, the researcher becomes fully engaged in the descriptive data collected, using data management techniques, such as coding, categorizing, or organizing data, using computer-aided software programs like NVivo®, to analyze data for themes, keywords, and patterns. At this step in the process, the researcher applies understanding of the data, to define and describe the phenomenon studied, by communicating the results effectively to the target audience (CIRT, 2018).

Participant Selection Logic

The participants in this qualitative phenomenological study consisted of both current and former expatriate-teachers who were currently working or had worked in the international school industry of China in the past 10 years. Morse (1994) suggested a purposive sample size of at least six research participants in phenomenological qualitative research. I employed a snowball sampling method to identify 20 to 30 participants who were currently working or had worked in international schools in China

in the past 10 years. These expatriate-teachers were purposefully recruited, via the LinkedIn professional networking site.

According to Giorgi (2009), qualitative researchers explore phenomena for comprehensive and wider knowledge, while employing a small sample size. This is because the knowledge of lived-experiences of people allows the researcher to discover the importance of the phenomena while analyzing data collected from research participants on a scientific level. The concentration of a researcher in phenomenological qualitative research is to collect and analyze data rigorously and systematically. I used the purposeful sampling method and my participant selection will be based on lived-experiences. Parker (2012) noted that purposeful sampling makes it easier to shortlist candidates with the knowledge of the phenomenon, who are capable of providing adequate information to address the research question. Former and current expatriate-teachers who were working or had worked in international schools in China were asked to discuss their lived-experiences as employees in different areas of their employment, through online video interviews.

I employed the dominant approach to protecting my research participants' identities. According to Kaiser (2009), the dominant approach is one of the common approaches to protecting qualitative research participants' confidentiality. In the dominant approach, data must be collected anonymously or without compromising the identities of research participants. Therefore, I protected my research participants by collecting, analyzing, and reporting data without revealing their identities. My ultimate goal was to ensure complete confidentiality for every research participant in this study.

In qualitative research, a saturation point occurs when no new information can be obtained from research participants. It is at the stage when discussions with participants are not producing any viable information that addresses the research question (Fusch & Ness, 2015). I contacted 30 research participants and interviewed 20 research participants, who met the stated criteria, before reaching data saturation.

Instrumentation

Fusch and Ness (2015) and Sarma (2015) noted that the researcher in qualitative phenomenological studies serves as the first data collection instrument. The researcher's involvement in all the stages of qualitative research is inevitable, due to high human involvement in phenomenological qualitative studies. One-on-one, face-to-face interviews were my primary data collection strategy. Interviews allow qualitative researchers the opportunity to explore the complexities of a given phenomenon in greater depth, observe body language, and ask appropriate follow-up questions (Jacob & Furgerson, 2012).

Giorgi (2009) noted that a phenomenological qualitative study involves data collection through many sources. Therefore, I triangulated my findings with data collected by Fong (2018) and John (2018).

An interview is the best way to obtain lived-experience information from research participants (John, 2018). Other methods such as written descriptions may not provide the kind of data that will be useful enough to address the research question. Interviews are done to mirror the natural settings of the phenomenon, to make the research participants comfortable and disposed of enough to tell their unique stories of their experiences about the phenomenon.

Salmons (2010) recommended that researchers should use the same tools and organizational jargon during interviews in phenomenological qualitative studies. Face-to-face interviews may present a big challenge due to geographical locations of some research participants, especially those who are former expatriate-teachers of the international school industry of China. Therefore, I conducted some of the interviews in real-time using videoconferencing applications. My interview questions can be found in Appendix B. The responses to the interview questions were analyzed to address the research question of this investigation.

Pilot Test

A pilot test is a small-scale preliminary study in the qualitative research method, to evaluate the feasibility of a study, in terms of time and cost needed in the data collection phase. It helps to check the validity of the research collection instrument (Walden University, 2016). I conducted a pilot test with three of my research participants who had expert knowledge of the phenomenon under study, to check the clarity, reliability, validity, and appropriateness of my interview questions. My pilot test was conducted with my colleagues in an international school in China. The pilot test participants were separated from the sample that I used for the actual study.

Procedures for Recruitment, Participation, and Data Collection

After my IRB approval, the first step towards my data collection process was to recruit my research participants. Therefore, I employed the snowball method of sampling to recruit research participants. Research participant selection occurred through the professional networking site, LinkedIn. This professional networking site aided me in identifying research participants who met the eligibility criterion of being a current or

former expatriate-teacher in the international school industry of China, within the past 10 years.

Obtaining answers to address my research question through the lived-experiences of my research participants was the ultimate goal and focus of the study. As stated by Broome (2011), description in this qualitative method is the first-person account of experience, as it was lived by a research participant in their daily lives. I conducted online video conferencing interviews with each of my research participants, by asking them several open-ended questions and follow-up questions, focusing on their respective lived-experiences as teachers in the international school industry of China (Benia, Hauck-Filho, Dillenburg, & Stein, 2015).

I analyzed the data I collected from the online video interviews using NVivo to identify codes and constituents. NVivo provided a place for me to store my data, so I could work more efficiently, to save time, and to use the query and visualization tool to configure my data for appropriate context; and to perform the coding process (QSR, 2018).

I was the sole data collector and the interviews were estimated to last for about one hour. According to Doody and Noonan (2013), researchers should provide a sense of order during interviews, by ensuring that adequate interview protocol is maintained. Therefore, I ensured that the following list of consequential reminders was maintained each time:

1. Thank the participants for their time.
2. Advise the participant of the length of the interview.
3. Ensure the participant of the confidentiality requirements to

include the use of pseudonyms.

4. Remind the participant that the interview will be recorded with a recording application
5. Collect an informed consent agreement.
6. Ask participants follow-up questions.
7. Explain the member-checking process and subsequent expectations after the interview process is complete.
8. Conduct closing remarks.

According to McGonagal, Brown, and Schoeni (2015), it is important to record interviews during qualitative studies, for verification, clarification, and quality control purposes. It also allows the researcher to easily compare and contrast the responses of various participants, during data analysis. I recorded all my interviews via my recording application on my iPhone. Interview recordings were transcribed to texts, and transcripts were uploaded on NVivo® for data management and analysis.

Data Analysis Plan

This phenomenological qualitative research consisted of 20 semi-structured online video interviews from current and former expatriate-teachers of the international school industry of China. In qualitative research, a researcher can employ NVivo for coding, assessing texts, writing memos, displaying the results in the form of graphs and tables, and displaying the completed codes (Oliveira, Bitencourt, Dos Santos, & Teixeira, 2015). My qualitative interview transcripts were the main data that were analyzed with NVivo, compiling the interview data into codes and constituents.

From the codes, I extracted constituents and then themes that related to potential causes of attrition, which improved understanding of the issue. Giorgi et al.'s (2017) five-step method of data analysis of assuming the phenomenological attitude, reading the naïve description of research participants, demarcating meaning units, transforming the meaning units into psychological sensitive descriptive expressions, and the synthesis of the general psychological structure from the psychological constituents of the experiences of my research participants, based on some principles of phenomenological philosophy, will be employed, to analyze the themes extracted from the interviews for psychological implications.

As suggested by Lincoln and Guba (1985), member-checking helps the researcher to stay true to the reporting of research participants' accounts of lived-experiences and underpins explaining and describing the universal essence of the phenomenon under investigation. I identified the codes obtained from responses, methodologically triangulated the data with the raw interview transcripts, and discussed my findings with some of my research participants, as prescribed by Fong (2018) and John (2018).

Issues of Trustworthiness

Credibility (Internal Validity)

As noted by Sarma (2015), to ensure research credibility, a researcher must ensure research reliability. To achieve adequate credibility in this study, I ensured that proper data collection and data interpretation occurred. As noted by Sarma (2015), to ensure research credibility, a researcher must ensure research reliability. According to Yilmaz (2013), reliability means the consistency found in the interview data. This was done through member-checking and triangulation of data, as prescribed by Fong (2018) and

Johns (2018). Data triangulation is accomplished when multiple sources from several participants validate the same phenomenon. This process strengthened the credibility of my data and also helped in the attainment of data saturation (Fusch & Ness, 2015).

Member-checking is a process of sharing interview transcripts with research participants, to check for accuracy and validity (Sarma, 2015). I asked my research participants to verify interview transcripts for errors before data analysis, to ensure credibility and mutual understanding of a given topic and response. Yin (2014) and Yilmaz (2013) noted that methodological member-checking and triangulation research credibility strategies, help to improve reliability, dependability, and transferability of research outcomes.

Transferability (External Validity)

Transferability is the degree to which qualitative study outcomes can be transferred to other subject contents and commentators. To achieve research transferability, research results must be relevant in other disciplines and other individuals who were not originally involved in the study (Anney, 2014). It also means that users and readers of the research findings will find the research outcomes useful in their respective organizations. According to Anney (2014), to ensure adequate transferability of research outcomes, it is important for a researcher to purposefully select research participants who are knowledgeable in the phenomenon to be studied.

Parker (2012) noted that purposeful sampling makes it easier to shortlist candidates with adequate knowledge of the phenomenon, who are capable of providing reliable information to address the research question. I employed the purposeful sampling method in this study of the factors that affect expatriate-teacher turnover in the

international school industry of China. I used LinkedIn to look at profiles and resumes of expatriate-teachers that have worked in international schools in China in the past 10 years. Their unique lived-experiences and perspectives helped to uncover the causes of expatriate-teacher turnover in the international school industry of China (Yin, 2014).

Dependability

The dependability of my research was based on the overall stability of the data I collected (Houghton, Casey, Shaw, & Murphy, 2013). Houghton et al. (2013) looked at the concept of dependability in qualitative research concerning the concept of reliability. According to them, reliability in this context means finding ways to minimize qualitative research errors and biases. Therefore, for my research to be dependable, I addressed the components of reliability, by using computer-aided data management software to analyze my data for objectivity. NVivo assisted in developing codes from interview transcripts, from which I organized the codes into constituents and then into themes (QSR, 2018).

Confirmability

Confirmability can be achieved in qualitative research when a researcher applies relevant rich quotes from interview participants to explain issues for the reader. It is the level of neutrality that a research participant finds in the study, devoid of bias (Amankwaa, 2016). Reflexivity in qualitative research is the idea of being neutral and being self-aware of personally held intrinsic biases and the relationship between the researcher and the research participants (Kanyangale & Pearse, 2012). I ensured that my values, assumptions, and biases were under control during data collection and analysis, in the rigorous pursuit of objectivity and neutrality.

Ethical Procedures

As soon as I received my Walden University Institutional Review Board (IRB) approval on the 7th of January 2010, I commenced the data collection process. My research adhered to the ethical guidelines stipulated by Walden University and the ethical standards outlined in the Belmont Report (1979). With IRB approval, I sent informed consent letters that explained the purpose of my study to my selected research participants via email.

The participants were assured of the liberty to withdraw from the study at any time during the process, by contacting the researcher directly, by phone or by email. Participation in the research was voluntary, devoid of any monetary compensation. Robinson (2014) noted that monetary incentive to participate in a study can lead participants to fabricate information, to make up for the money they received, which could make my research outcome unreliable in the long run.

My recruitment material was with the LinkedIn professional networking application. This application has a confidential platform to send and receive messages to each research participant privately. In line with the Belmont Report (1979), the ethical procedures related to the recruitment materials and research participants was based on justice and fairness. I ensured that I do not engage in recruiting only persons that will potentially benefit from this research, but only those who met the criterion of being selected, without reference to the social, racial, sexual, or cultural status of the participants. Justice is the principled obligation to treat each research participant equally, by providing participants protection from research-related risks and access to research related benefits (Quinn, Kass, & Thomas, 2013).

The office of Human Research Protection at Walden University (2016) emphasized emphatically acknowledged the principle of respect and justice for research participants. As reported by Cugini (2015), respect for research participants entails two ethical considerations: respect for their autonomy and protection for persons with reduced autonomy. Beneficence is my ethical obligation to ensure that I maximize benefits and refrain from harm by every means possible. I followed the protocol stipulated by the Belmont Report (1979) to eliminate any risk or harm to my research participants, with appropriate communication, such as ensuring that I erased all interview recordings and interview transcripts if a participant decided to withdraw from the study at any time (Ketefian, 2015). I did not include my professional organization in this study, to avoid conflict of interest, maintain the validity of my research results, or any power differentials.

Interview data were securely stored and managed with NVivo where I am the only person who has access to it for at least 5 years. Protecting my research participant's privacy is a very important aspect of this research (Morse & Coulehan, 2015); therefore, I ensured that I stored all my interview recordings and transcripts in a password-protected private computer. After the 5 years, I will destroy the data by erasing all digital files, to ensure that confidential data of each of my research participant are safeguarded. I also offered my research participants the option of not publishing their names, age, gender, occupation or organization.

Summary

The purpose of this qualitative descriptive phenomenological study was to identify the factors that affect expatriate-teacher turnover in the international school

industry of China. I employed the purposeful sampling method to recruit my research participants, through a LinkedIn professional networking application. My research participants consisted of 20 former and current expatriate-teachers of the international school industry of China. The reliability of my research data and outcomes was maintained by ensuring that I employed the member-checking and triangulation strategies.

Chapter 4: Results

The purpose of this descriptive qualitative phenomenological study was to identify the factors that affect expatriate-teacher turnover in the international education industry of China. The research participants consisted of expatriate teachers who have worked or are currently working in the international school industry of China. As Pearce (2013) and Poole (2018) reported, scholarly research on the internationalized schools in China is limited, partly because the internationalized schools in China are relatively new. From the information generated in the qualitative descriptive phenomenological process, my study sought common constituents and themes from interviews with expatriate-teachers in China, regarding factors that affect expatriate-teacher turnover in the international school industry of China, to address the research question of the lived-experiences of expatriate-teachers regarding causes of turnover and their career intentions in the international school industry of China.

The qualitative descriptive phenomenological method was appropriate for this study because it is a comprehensive method that recognizes research participants as historical beings with lived-experiences as part of their constitutional framework. This method involves exploring and understanding the lived-experiences of my research participants (Giorgi, & Morley, 2017).

Chapter 4 covers the pilot test and pre-data analysis that I performed with three expatriate-teachers with expert knowledge of the phenomenon under study, to help check the clarity, reliability, validity, and appropriateness of my interview questions. Chapter 4 provides a review of the data collection process, including participant selection for both the pilot test and the actual descriptive qualitative phenomenological study. The data

analysis of the qualitative descriptive phenomenological study of the data is also included.

Pilot Study

Pilot study participants were selected from the original nine volunteers who agreed to participate in a presentation I made on a human resource management topic, at a bi-weekly faculty meeting. Among the nine volunteers who agreed to participate, three were contacted and they agreed to participate. They responded by replying to the introductory email, which identified the purpose of the study, the rationale, and the guidelines of the pilot study sent on January 10, 2020. The pilot study was conducted between January 14, 2020, and January 19, 2020, via a face-to-face interview.

The pilot study process included a detailed explanation of the reason for the pilot, which was to validate my study instrument by eliminating any potentially ambiguous or redundant wording in the open-ended interview questions and follow-up questions. The pilot study included three participants who met the criteria for participation in main study. The criteria for participation in this study is that a participant is required to be an expatriate-teacher who had worked in the past 10 years or currently working in the international school industry of China. Two of the pilot study participants have worked in more than one international school in China and were able to provide diverse perspectives on the phenomenon, from the specific regions where they worked.

The pilot study produced a consensus and approval from the three pilot research participants, that the interview questions were clear and understandable. As a result, there were no changes to the interview questions. As Lancaster, Dodd, and Williamson (2014) noted, if significant differences were identified in the proposed data collection instrument

during the pilot study, the main study should not proceed. In the proposed qualitative descriptive phenomenological study, no significant issues such as ambiguity and redundancy in questioning were identified during the pilot study feedback.

Research Setting

After I received my IRB approval number on January 7, 2020, I sent out my introductory email to potential research participants, recruited via LinkedIn professional networking site, and received several responses. According to Wang and Inoue (2020), the coronavirus pandemic subsequently required all the schools in China, including the international schools, to remain closed until further notice by the order of the Chinese government, as a measure to curtail and contain the spread of the coronavirus. The situation disrupted my original data collection plan of conducting face-to-face interviews with my research participants as some of them were no longer available because healthcare professionals and the Chinese government advised all the residents in China to refrain from physical contacts and public meetings, and that public cafes and restaurant should remain closed, as preventive measures to curtail the spread of coronavirus. My data collection tool changed from face-to-face interviews to online video interviews with Skype and with WeChat, one of the most popular videos and messaging applications in China. With these online video call applications, I was able to conduct interviews with my recruited research participants both in China and overseas.

Demographics

I collected demographic information on the participants, tabulated in Tables 3 and 4. Table 3 indicates the length of time each research participant had worked in the international school industry of China in the past 10 years. As stipulated in the research participant recruitment criteria, participants were required to have worked within the past 10 years or had currently been working in the international school industry within the past 10 years. It was convenient that all 20 research participants interviewed had employment experience or were currently working in the international school industry of China from 2010 to 2020.

Table 3

Length of Employment in the International School Industry of China

| Length of time | Number of research participants |
|------------------|---------------------------------|
| Less than 1 year | 3 |
| 1 to 2 years | 5 |
| 2 to 3 years | 4 |
| 4 to 6 years | 2 |
| 6 to 8 years | 3 |
| 8 to 10 years | 3 |

The second characteristic of my research participants was the cities and provinces of China they had worked. The purpose of this demographic information is to understand, compare, and contrast the employment experiences of expatriate-teachers from different cities, geographical locations, Chinese territories, and provinces. The data indicated that research participants were currently working or had worked in international schools in

seven of the major provinces of China; Shanghai, Beijing, Guangdong, Hunan, Hubei, Jiangsu, and Sichuan.

Table 4

Provinces in China Where Research Participants Had Employment Experience

| Number of research participants | Chinese provinces where they worked |
|---------------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| 5 | Guangdong |
| 5 | Shanghai |
| 4 | Beijing |
| 2 | Sichuan |
| 2 | Hunan |
| 1 | Hubei |
| 1 | Jiangsu |

Data Collection

The raw data for this study consisted of the *naïve description* of the first-person accounts of teachers' experiences as they were lived and understood by the participants. Since no other person can co-experience the subjective psychological perspective of any lived- experience with the participants, the best and only record of such an experience exists (at least, in part) within the memory of those who experienced it. To initiate the telling of participants' experiences, the initial question for the participants was very simply presented as, "please share with me the experiences that led you to seek employment as a teacher in the international school in China?"

The interview questions were open-ended and intended to offer the participants a wide range in which they could verbally describe their lived-

experience. As my research participants described the experience to me, I made mental notes of their verbal transitions, it seemed that more could have been said about the subject they were responding to or that some of the participants naturally veered away from the crux of the question asked. When a participant reached a point where they had said all that could be said on a question, I asked one or more follow-up questions like, “You spoke of leadership and staff motivation, can you tell more about that?” These follow-up questions were not purposefully leading in the sense of trying to get more information; rather, it was an interviewing technique intended to re-open the door to an aspect of the account that was presented, which was not expressed fully by the participant.

I wanted to acquire a verbal *re-living of the experience* as expressed by my research participants. Relating to the lived-experience of participants, based upon their memory, carries a certain level of dubiousness about the accuracy. According to Giorgi (2012), data received via the self-report methods, such as questionnaires and interviews are always subject to memory decay, participants’ response errors, and alterations. Giorgi (2009) and Giorgi and Giorgi (2003) noted that there are no perfect descriptions, but adequate descriptions can be obtained, and the embedded psychological meanings can be analyzed.

My interview strategy was not intended to spur or jog the participants to remember some obscure details, but rather help them to simply describe in detail, what it was like for them during their lived-experiences in the international schools in China. I was confident that the data provided by the interviews were sufficient were identify the

most salient and personally important aspects of the lived-experiences of my research participants, based on their memories.

I collected data via Skype and WeChat video interviews for 5 weeks, from January 29, 2020, to March 2, 2020. The 20 interviews lasted an average of 45 minutes, excluding greetings and pleasantries, and were scheduled based on research participants' availability, location, and preferences. Data were recorded with an iPhone voice recording application and transcribed to text with the *transcribe* audio transcribing software. The transcription software helps users convert audio files to text, via fast and accurate dictation feature (Transcribe, 2020). The result of the data collected and transcribed was a ranked list of the most important issues that could help to address the problem of expatriate-teacher turnover in the international school industry of China.

All 20 research participants interviewed answered the core question related to the challenging aspects of their employment in the international school industry of China. The 20 participants selected also responded to the five open-ended questions. The first question asked the participants to reflect on what led them to seek teaching employment in the international school industry of China. The second question asked them about their respective experiences regarding turnover causes and their own career intentions in the international school industry of China. The third question was a follow-up question from the second question, which asked participants to address their experiences of not having some of their colleagues back at school at the beginning of every school year.

All 20 participants addressed the fourth question regarding their experiences with leadership in the international school industry of China. The fifth question, which focused on how the effects of the teaching experience in the international school industry of China on the professional wellbeing of the expatriate-teachers, was answered by all the participants.

The coronavirus outbreak situation in China changed the original data collection plan. My original data collection method planned for face-to-face, one-on-one interviews in neutral locations, such as in a private room of a public library, quiet area of a café, or a quiet area of a public park; and online one-on-one interviews via Skype and WeChat video online applications. According to Denham and Onwuegbuzie (2013), body language in qualitative research data collection instruments, such as interviews and observation in the forms of hand gestures, facial expressions, and body movements are core semantic information, which are beyond speech, where underlying meanings could be detected by the researcher. The absence of a face-to-face interview in my data collection effort prevented me from fully observing the underlying meanings my research participants were portraying via body movements that were not possible to observe in an online video interview.

Data Analysis

The phenomenological qualitative research consisted of 20 semi-structured online interviews with current and former expatriate-teachers of the international school industry of China. The recorded interview data from each of the 20 research participants were transcribed into text with the *Transcribe* computer software (Transcribe, 2020). I analyzed the qualitative interview transcript with NVivo. I used NVivo to code and

compile the interview data into constituents and themes (Oliveira, Bitencourt, Dos Santos, & Teixeira, 2015).

According to Broome (2008), the description of the psychological insights contained within each meaning unit form a set of constituents. In my research, the responses from the 20 participants to the questions were entered into NVivo and then coded. The codes were grouped into constituents. Themes were identified as descriptors for constituents, organizing the groups of repeated ideas, which enabled me to address the research question (Snelgrove, Turunen, Jones, & Vaismoradi, 2015).

I used Giorgi's (2012) five-step method of data analysis. In each step, I began the data analysis process once the interviews were transcribed and the text became the empirical evidence to be analyzed for its social implications. The first step of Giorgi's (2019) five-step phenomenological research method is for the researcher to assume the phenomenological attitude. The phenomenological attitude is different from the natural attitude or everyday way of understanding the world. In the phenomenological attitude, the researcher brackets their everyday knowledge to take a fresh look at the data. In other words, the researcher puts away their intrinsic perspectives, theoretical, experiential, or otherwise (Broome, 2011). In the first step, I assumed the phenomenological attitude and then proceeded to the next step.

In the second step of my data analysis, I read the entire naïve description provided by my participants, to get a sense of the whole experience (Giorgi, 2009, 1985; Giorgi & Giorgi, 2003). The naïve description provided by my participants

was taken in a natural attitude in the way they experienced things in their everyday living. This was done without a critical reflection on the experience. However, the “I” remained in my phenomenological attitude to put out of action, all the commonsense presuppositions to conduct a critical reflection about my research participant’s experience, to describe how it was phenomenally experienced (Giorgi, 2009; Husserl, 2008/1931). It was in the phenomenological attitude that I was *present* to the data as it was given. The step was that it helped me to collect raw data objectively from my research participants.

The third step of my data analysis was the demarcation of the meaning units within the narrative so that the data could be dealt with in manageable portions (Giorgi, 2009, 1985; Giorgi, 2003). I went through the narrative text in a subsequent reading to determine where places of a meaning shifted within it. The stream of lived-experience in the consciousness was seen as landmarks, in a way that is comparable to how we see the rapids, windings, and falls in a water stream. To distinguish the meaning units, I marked the demarcations with a *forward slash (/)* at the cleavage between two meaning units (Giorgi, 2009).

In the fourth step, I transformed the meaning units into psychologically sensitive expressions. I took the phenomenon of the study to the psychological level to align with scientific research practice rather than the transcendental level which is to practice philosophy. The psychological level was seen as an individuated and personal level rather than a transcendental (universal, unconditional, and independent of experience) (Giorgi, 2009). I took each meaning unit in its third-person form and transformed it into a statement that expressed its essential psychological meanings. Using a mode of

psychological sensitivity, I located and elucidated the psychological meanings contained in the data. Imaginative variations were then performed by changing the qualities of the object being analyzed to determine which qualities were essential and which were accidental (present but not required) (Giorgi, 2012). The general structure of the experience in my data analysis was descriptive paragraphs that laid out the lived-experiences of my research participants, from a psychological approach.

In the fifth step, I synthesized the data I collected from participants. NVivo helped me to develop common codes from the raw interview transcripts. From the common codes, I formed essential constituents from the meaning units of the experiences of my participants. The constituents that emerged from my data analysis were hand-coded and were not independent from each other, but were a necessary part of the whole structure. The purpose of this procedure was grounded in the phenomenological concept of parts and whole. This was important because it demonstrated that I could classify a single, individual experience in different ways.

Also, in the fifth step, I identified the themes obtained from constituents. As suggested by Fong (2018) and John (2018), in this step, I methodologically triangulated the codes, constituents, and themes with the raw interview data I transcribed and discussed my findings with some of my research participants to stay true to the reporting of their accounts of lived-experiences. The analysis of my research participants' experiences yielded 19 constituents.

Broome (2014) noted that the interdependency of the constituents that emerge from data analysis shows how each event unfolds, not only in a manifold complex experience that in a sense seems like a chain reaction, but also in a very nonlinear holistic experience for my research participants. I considered each constituent one at a time, but the structure gave me the impression that there was not a sequence of events. Therefore, I could not separate the constituents out from one another if I was to capture an understanding of the lived-experiences of the participants and how those experiences transformed their lives. The following outlines the constituents generated from each interview question and the themes generated from the constituents:

Question 1

Question: Can you please share with me the experiences that led you to seek employment as a teacher in an international school in China?

Constituents:

- A suitable place to practice international education
- Better financial incentives
- Suitable for the international baccalaureate curriculum
- Overseas experience
- Lack of employment in my home country

Theme: Expatriate-teachers' employment decision

Table 5

Question 1 Constituents and Responses

| Constituents | Number of responses |
|---|---------------------|
| A suitable place to practice international education | 17 |
| Better financial incentives | 15 |
| Suitable for the international baccalaureate curriculum | 13 |
| Overseas experience | 9 |
| Lack of employment in my home country | 5 |

Question 2

Question: What are the most challenging aspects of your employment at an expatriate-teacher in China?

Constituents:

- Internet censorship
- High-income tax
- Culture shock
- Restriction of course contents or textbook censorship

Theme: China employment conditions

Table 6

Question 2 Constituents and Responses

| Constituents | Number of responses |
|---|---------------------|
| Internet censorship | 20 |
| High-income tax | 17 |
| Culture shock | 11 |
| Restriction of course contents or textbook censorship | 6 |

Question 3

Question: What are your experiences regarding turnover as an expatriate-teacher in the international school industry of China?

Constituents:

- Staff and students' anxiety
- Shopping for higher benefit packages
- Competition in the industry

Theme: Strong conditions and job attributes

Table 7

Question 3 Constituents and Responses

| Constituents | Number of responses |
|--------------------------------------|---------------------|
| Staff and students' anxiety | 20 |
| Shopping for higher benefit packages | 18 |
| Competition in the industry | 20 |

Question 4

Question: Could you tell me your experience of not having some of your colleagues back at school at the beginning of every school year, due to high turnover in the industry?

Constituents:

- Expatriate-teachers are temporary workers
- Difficult to maintain a closely-knit staff culture

Theme: Lack of cohesiveness and camaraderie

Table 8

Question 4 Constituents and Responses

| Constituents | Number of responses |
|--|---------------------|
| Expatriate-teachers are temporary workers | 16 |
| Difficult to maintain a closely-knit staff culture | 16 |

Question 5

Question: Can you tell me more about your experience with leadership in terms of enhancing expatriate-teacher retention in the industry?

Constituents:

- Lack of direction
- No guideline from the Chinese government

Theme: A tendency for weak leadership

Table 9

Questions 5 Constituents and responses

| Constituents | Number of responses |
|--|---------------------|
| Lack of direction | 11 |
| No guideline from the Chinese government | 11 |

Question 6

Question: Are there any other insights you gained from your experiences as an expatriate- teacher in the international school industry of China that you wish to share with me before we close the discussions?

Constituents:

- Absence of trade union
- Synergy among students
- Language barrier
- More international schools in China

Theme: Strong positives and negatives in the expatriate teaching arena

Table 10

Questions 6 Constituents and Responses

| Constituents | Number of responses |
|-------------------------------------|---------------------|
| Absence of trade unions | 8 |
| Synergy among students | 16 |
| Language barrier | 7 |
| More international schools in China | 18 |

Table 11

The Frequency of Constituents

| Frequency of constituents | Level of responses from participants |
|--|--------------------------------------|
| Internet censorship | 20 |
| Staff and students' anxiety | 20 |
| Competition in the industry | 20 |
| More international schools in China | 18 |
| Shopping for higher benefit packages | 18 |
| A suitable place to practice international education | 17 |
| High-income tax | 17 |
| Synergy among students | 17 |
| Temporary workers and difficult to maintain a closely-knit staff culture | 16 |
| Better financial incentives | 16 |
| Suitable for the international baccalaureate curriculum | 16 |
| Lack of direction | 11 |
| No guideline from the Chinese government | 11 |
| Culture shock | 11 |
| Overseas experience | 9 |
| Absence of trade unions | 8 |
| Language barrier | 7 |
| Restriction of course contents or textbook censorship | 6 |
| Lack of employment in my home country | 5 |

Evidence of Trustworthiness

Credibility (Internal Validity)

As noted by Sarma (2015), to ensure research credibility, a researcher must ensure research reliability. According to Yilmaz (2013), reliability means the consistency found in the interview data. To achieve adequate credibility in this study, I ensured that proper data collection and data interpretation occurred, via video conferencing as my data collection method and by employing NVivo for data analysis. I also employed member-checking and triangulation of data strategies to ensure the credibility of my data before data analysis.

According to Fong (2018), the data triangulation process enables several participants to validate the same phenomenon. Following the guidance of Fusch and Ness (2015), member-checking and the triangulation of the data process helped to strengthen the credibility of my data and also helped me to attain data saturation. For member-checking, I shared the transcript of interviews with the research participants to check for accuracy and validity (Sarma, 2015). I had my research participants review and verify interview transcripts for errors before data analysis. This was to ensure the credibility and mutual understanding of the responses to the research questions. According to Yin (2014) and Yilmaz (2013), methodological member-checking and triangulation are sound research credibility strategies, which improve reliability, dependability, and transferability of research outcomes.

Transferability (External Validity)

Transferability is the degree to which qualitative study outcomes can be transferred to other subject contents and commentators. As suggested by Anney (2014),

to achieve research transferability, research results must be relevant in other disciplines and other individuals who were not originally involved in the study, it also means that users and readers of the research findings will find the research outcomes useful in their respective organizations, to this effect, I ensured adequate transferability of my research outcomes, by employing the purposeful sampling method, to select my research participants, who were knowledgeable on the factors that affect expatriate-teacher turnover in the international school industry of China; who worked or were currently working as expatriate-teachers in the international school industry of China.

Parker (2012) noted that purposeful sampling makes it easier to shortlist candidates with adequate knowledge of the phenomenon, who can provide reliable information to address the research question. I employed the purposeful sampling method. I used LinkedIn to look at profiles and resumes of expatriate-teachers who have worked in international schools in China in the past 10 years. Their unique lived-experiences and perspectives helped to uncover the causes of expatriate-teacher turnover in the international school industry of China.

Dependability

Houghton, Casey, Shaw, and Murphy (2013) explained that dependability and reliability are ways to minimize qualitative research errors and biases. To ensure that my research was dependable, I used NVivo to analyze my interview data objectively. I used member-checking to ensure accuracy of data collected during interviews. As a result, the dependability of my research was based on the overall consistency of the data I collected.

Confirmability

Confirmability can be achieved in qualitative research when a researcher applies relevant rich quotes from interview participants to explain issues for the reader, neutrally, and devoid of bias (Amankwaa, 2016). I ensured that my values, assumptions, and biases were under control during data collection and analysis, in the rigorous pursuit of objectivity and neutrality. I used rich quotes from interviews with my research participants to explain issues in detail. I also used triangulation to ensure that I presented the lived experiences of my participants accurately.

Study Results

The purpose of this study was to address the research question: What are the lived experiences of expatriate-teachers regarding causes of turnover and their career intentions in the international school industry of China? The research question was, what are the lived-experiences of expatriate-teachers regarding turnover and their career intentions in the international school industry of China? The narrative that follows provides a detailed summary of the result, organized by six themes.

Theme 1: Expatriate-Teachers' Employment Decision

A suitable place to practice international education. The suitability of China as a country to practice international education and teaching was based on two factors: (a) globalization and (b) diversity. The comments elicited were “the whole world is moving towards interdependence” (P3), “globalization is the future of the current generation” (P14), “our world is financially connected” (P3), “the movement of people out of their home countries, for tourism and exploration has become the norm in our societies” (P6),

“there is unity in diversity” (P6), “there is a lot to learn when you mingle with people from other backgrounds, origin, and religion” (P1).

As China has become the second-largest economy of the world, since early 2008 (Worldbank, 2020), most of my research participants' comments on the attractiveness to move to China as expatriate-teachers were centered on how China has helped foster globalization. For example, as P6, P7, P9, P16, and P18 stated, “There are many nationalities in China.” “Many expatriate families and companies are in China” (P2). Participants’ impressions were that since most multinational companies have operating locations in China, China will be a country where the concept of intercultural understanding should be enhanced, and where different cultures, human races, and religions should co-exist peacefully.

Better financial incentives. Many participants provided insight into the fact that the financial packages offered to them by international schools in China during the recruitment process were better than what they were earning in their home countries. The better financial incentive was further classified into two subcategories: (a) cost of living in China and (b) fringe benefits. The Participants’ comments were centered on the fact that most of their employers in China offer them several fringe benefits, such as return flights to their home countries at the end of each academic year, medical and life insurances, accommodation, free education for their children who are below 18 years old, and gratuity at the end of their contracts.

According to the following participants, P5, P9, P11, and P13, “The cost of living in China is relatively low, in comparison to Australia.” “There are cheap

public transportation systems in big cities, which might eliminate any need for a personal car” (P7 & P9). Most of the participants agreed that their employment in the international school industry of China provided them with the opportunity to save money and make personal investments on assets, such as houses and lands in their home countries.

Suitable for the international baccalaureate curriculum. The international baccalaureate (IB) curriculum emerged as one of the reasons for seeking employment in the international school industry of China. According to the IBO (2019), China is among the countries with the largest number of international schools that offer the IB curriculum. Several participants indicated their love and appreciation for the IB philosophy and noted that China is one of the best places to teach the IB curriculum because of the diverse population of expatriates living in China.

According to many of the participants, the IB curriculum teaches students the values of tolerance, empathy, and open-mindedness. The concept of international-mindedness and the 9 learner profiles are the elements that underpin the teaching and learning in the IB curriculum. “Students in IB curriculum school challenge themselves in and out of the classroom” (P8), “the CAS program is designed to teach them Corporate Social Responsibility(CRS), how to contribute meaningfully to the society” (P7), “the IB curriculum reinforces globalization, inter-connectedness, and inter-dependence of the countries of our world” (P10). “China has the largest number of international schools in the world” (P11), “the IB curriculum provides easy entry to universities in students’ home countries” (P12).

Overseas experience. General comments were mentioned about gaining overseas experience as a reason for seeking employment as an expatriate-teacher in the

international school industry of China. Learning about other people's historical and cultural backgrounds, personal space, language, and religion are some of the reasons mentioned by participants for seeking employment in China, expressed in these words; “I was a fresh college graduate, looking to gain overseas teaching experience” (P8), “experience is the best teacher” (P17). “I wanted to practice teaching an international curriculum,” “the world is too large to be confined in one’s only country” (P16). “I wanted my kids to have the opportunity of learning to live and study with kids from other counties” (P13), “the opportunity to learn a new language” (P1).

Lack of employment in own country. A few of the 20 participants mentioned a lack of employment in their home country as a reason to seek employment as an expatriate-teacher in China. When pressed further on this topic, some of the participants revealed that the teaching profession in their home countries is not well-rewarded and comes with low fringe benefit packages, in contrast to the international teaching employment packages offered to them by the international school industry of China via their recruitment companies.

Some of the specialist teachers of music, physical education, and some science and technical subjects noted that they had to seek employment in China where the vacancies of their core subjects and competency abound because their subjects were not in high demand in their respective home countries. According to the following participants, P1, P7, and P7, “it is not very easy to find a music teaching job in my country, most schools look for English, math, and science teachers.” “Teaching job is not well-rewarded in my home country” (P8),

“vacancies for subjects such as PE, Music, and some technical subjects are not easy to find” (P10), “low fringe benefits packages for teachers in my home country” (P12).

Theme 2: China Employment Conditions

Theme 2 centered on the challenging academic issues my participants faced in their respective employments in the international school industry of China, produced the following constituents: (a) internet censorship, (b) high-income tax in China, (c) culture shock, and (d) restriction of course contents or textbook censorship. There was an overwhelming consensus among the research participant on the question. The majority of them mentioned 3 to 4 themes above as the most challenging aspect of their employment and overall residence in China.

Internet censorship. All 20 participants noted the difficulty they faced or currently facing, by not being able to have free access to several of the websites and mobile applications, such as YouTube, Gmail, Google, Facebook, Instagram, etc., that are not blocked in their home countries when they arrived in China. Though most of them noted also, that they had prior knowledge of the issue via online researches and social media information before accepting to relocate to China as expatriate-teachers. Some expatriate-teachers noted that their prospective employers in China assured them during their job interviews that most of the international schools in China are exempted from internet censorship. According to one participant, “I was told that the school’s Virtual Private Network (VPN) will unblock all the restricted websites, and yes, it does, but also slows down the internet speed” (P1). Other participants also noted that, “VPN slows down the internet speed in China” (P2, P5, & P10). “Websites and mobile applications such as YouTube, Facebook, Gmail, etc., are blocked in China” (P3).

High-income tax. According to one of the research participants that worked in an IB world international schools in 2 of the big provinces in China, income tax for an expatriate-teacher that makes between \$5000 to USD 7000 a month is about 25%. Other participants felt that the income tax structure in China for foreigners is complex and difficult to understand. “Expatriate-teachers’ pay high income tax” (P7), “China’s income tax structure is too complex to understand” (P1). Expatriate-teacher income in China is taxed monthly at a progressive tax rate that caps at 45%. According to China’s State Administration on Taxation (2018), income tax progression for foreign nationals are as follows;

Table 12

The income tax rate for foreign nationals’ resident in China

| Earnings in RMB | Rate Applicable to Income Level (%) |
|------------------|-------------------------------------|
| 0-3,000 | 3% |
| 3,001-12,000 | 10% |
| 12,001-25,000 | 20% |
| 25,001-35,000 | 25% |
| 35,001-55,000 | 30% |
| 55,001-80,000 | 35% |
| 80,001 and above | 45% |

Note: Adapted from data collected from China State Administration on Taxation (2018).

Culture Shock. Culture shock and the transition logistics to China was reported by several of the participants as major challenging factors in their first few weeks of employment in China. One of the participants reported his disbelief of not being able to find foreign mage products in his neighborhood

grocery shop. The comments elicited from participants on culture shock were “It was shocking not to find New Zealand butter in the big supermarket next to my building” (P2, P8, and P14), “language barrier was a big issue as most Chinese taxi drivers do not speak English” (P2 & P7), “it took a long time for the logistic company to deliver the items I shipped from my home country, and I was heavily taxed for importing items into China” (P10), “few foreign-made products in the supermarkets” (P8), “most Chinese taxi drivers could not communicate in English language” (P12 & P14).

Restriction of course contents or textbook censorship. It was noted by a few of the participants that Chinese citizens are not allowed admission into the international schools in China. The international schools termed as the Type C schools by Poole (2018), which offer the international baccalaureate curriculums, are instructed by the Chinese government, not to offer admission to Chinese citizens. But the majority of the students in the IB world international schools in China are students of Chinese descent, who hold international passports or citizenship of other countries, such as the US, Australia, Germany, New Zealand, Canada, UK, etc.

Few of the participants reported being told by their Head of Faculty or Head of the School to refrain from teaching course contents that refers to the political structure and system of China or the communist party. According to the participants, “Chinese citizens are not allowed admission into the Type C schools” (P3, P8, and P11). “Students of Chinese descent with foreign passports can be admitted to the Type C schools” (P12), “course contents that refer to Chinese politics, should be avoided” (P19).

Theme 3: Strong Condition and Job Attributes

The data coding with NVivo® on the third interview questions, focusing on the individual experiences regarding turnover, their intentions, and the experiences of not having some of the members of the faculty or colleagues back in school at the beginning of each school year, in the international school industry of China emerged with the following constituents: (a) staff and students' anxiety, (b) shopping for higher benefit packages, and (c) competition in the industry.

Staff and students' anxiety. All the participants that worked or are currently working in the international school of China, reported about the tradition that exists in their respective schools, towards the end of each school year, in May and June. Both students and staff become curious and are usually anxious to know if their teachers or colleagues will be returning for the upcoming academic year. According to one of the participants, "there are send-off parties, staff and students cry and express emotions during these parties" (P5), "parting parties are never easy, I usually prefer avoiding the parties, if I could" (P9) "staff and students are always anxious to know about their teacher and colleagues' employment contract renewal intentions" (P11).

Competition in the industry. Participants unanimously noted that there is a shortage of qualified expatriate-teachers for the international schools in China. This is partly because of the speed new international schools are opened in China in the past 10 years. There are more international schools needing qualified expatriate-teachers in China and fewer expatriate-teachers willing to relocate to China. Participants noted that, "there is shortage of expatriate-teachers in the

industry” (P3, P6, and P17), “new international schools are opened in China every quarter” (P9 & P7), “qualified IB teachers are in short supply” (P13). According to the International School Council (2019), China has the highest number of international schools in the world.

Shopping for higher benefit packages. Several recruitment agencies serve as third-party human resource department for the international schools in China. These recruitment agencies in their bid to offer the best teachers to their respective clients and maximize their service fees, advertise attractive employment packages, organize, and hold recruitment fairs all year round, especially, during the recruitment season, between October to April of the following year. As stated by one of the participants, “the third-party recruitment agency business practice, reinforces employment mobility and enhances expatriate-teacher turnover in the international schools in China” (P8), “recruitment agencies advertise periodically, lists of attractive teaching vacancies on their portals” (P12, P17, and P20).

Table 13

Top 10 Countries for the Number of International Schools from 2010 to 2019

| Country | Total number of English-medium international schools |
|----------------------|--|
| China | 884 |
| India | 708 |
| United Arab Emirates | 664 |
| Pakistan | 485 |
| Indonesia | 342 |
| Nigeria | 326 |
| Japan | 291 |
| Italy | 289 |
| Saudi Arabia | 284 |
| Malaysia | 283 |

Note. Adapted from data collected from ISC (2019).

Theme 4: Lack of Cohesiveness and Camaraderie

Expatriate-teachers are temporary workers. The majority of the participants expressed the fact that expatriate-teachers in the international school industry of China are like temporary workers, due to several of the variables mentioned above. Initial employment contracts for an expatriate-teachers range between 2 to 3 years, with the option of contract renewal or extension, based on mutual agreement between the employer and the employee. Therefore, the expiration of each employment contract creates room for both self-appraisal and an opportunity to compare and contrast other teaching vacancies, advertised by the third-party recruitment agencies in China. As one participant noted, “the

expiration of each teaching contract, provides an opportunity for us to shop for other vacancies with better employment package” (P18).

Difficult to maintain a closely-knit staff culture. As one participant who have worked for 2 different international schools in China said, “I always like to check what is available out there before I renew my contract at the end of my contract” (P1), “I like to attend one or two recruitment fairs to see what is out there” (P11). Several of the participants also agree unanimously that it is difficult to maintain a lasting closely-knit staff culture, because of the ephemeral nature of expatriate-teachers’ employment in the international school industry of China, and the changes that happen in the staff community as a result of expatriate-teacher turnover at the beginning of each school year, especially changes in leadership.

Theme 5: A Tendency for Weak Leadership

The responses from participants on the fifth question which centered on leadership in the international school industry generated the following constituents: (a) Lack of direction, (b) No guidelines from the Chinese government.

Lack of direction. Leadership style in most of the international schools in China according to several of the participants depends on individual orientation. There are no guidelines from the Chinese government or some of the international school accreditation bodies on leadership in the international school industry of China. Participants noted that the accreditation bodies such as the International School Council (ISC) and the International Baccalaureate Organization (IBO) have expectations on international school leadership, which they somewhat enforce or checkmate during their respective accreditation visits, which are done at a specified date, bi-annually, or every 5 years. As

the participants noted, “the accreditation bodies of the international schools in China do not guide leadership in the industry.” “there is no specific leadership style in the industry” (P4 & P9).

No guidelines from the Chinese government. The majority of the participant reported that there are no clear guidelines regarding leadership in international schools in China. According to some of the participants, “if you get an Australian Head of School, you will expect Australian kind of leadership” (P6, P12, and P19). “If you get an American Head of School, you will expect an American kind of leadership,” “leadership also depends on individual styles” (P7), “I left my first school at the end of the first year because I did not like the micro-management style of the HOS” (P13).

Theme 6: Strong Positives and Negatives in the Expatriate Teaching Arena

More international schools in China. Most of the participants’ responded to the last question which centered on the experiences gained from their employment as an expatriate-teacher in China, by recognizing the rapid rise of the international school industry in China. According to one participant who worked in international schools in both Shanghai and Beijing, “international school is big business in China” (P20), “international schools are opened in China every quarter” (P17), “many multinational businesses have opened international schools in several parts of China” (P13), and “different countries such as the US, UK, France, Germany, Canada, Australia, India, South Korea, and Japan also opened their respective schools in China” (P4 and P16).

Synergy among students. On the last question that focused on what the insights participants gained with their respective experiences in the international school industry of China, majority of the participants reported their satisfaction with the development and progress of students in the international schools in China. One participant stated thus, “IB students in these schools are internationally minded” (P19), “the CAS program teaches them what their counterparts in traditional schools do not teach,” (P11), “there are lots of extra-curricular activities, such as model United Nation program, sports programs, art exhibitions programs, etc., in the international schools in China that help the students learn teamwork skills and the value of diversity” (P16).

The responses from participants on the sixth questions which focused on the insights my research participant gained from being an expatriate-teacher in the international school industry of China emerged with constituents, such as (a) absence of trade unions, (b) synergy among students, (c) language barrier, and (d) more international schools in China.

Absence of trade unions. A trade union is an organized group of workers, whose primary objective is to protect the interest of their members (Investopedia, 2020). As stated by one of the participants, “there is nobody that advocates for expatriate-teachers in China” (P8), “independent trade unions are not allowed in China by the Chinese government” (P13), “if you have a problem with your employer, you will sort it out by yourself or quit your job” (P17).

Language barrier. A few of the participants mentioned the impact of language barrier in China as a big part of their experience in China. One of the participants that worked in an international school located in a suburb of Guangdong province

demonstrated her initial difficulty, ordering food from a local restaurant and giving directions to a taxi driver. According to her, “though the Chinese government has instructed that English language be taught in all the public schools in China as a major subject in the past 10 years, the use of English language as a medium of communication in China is still farfetched” (P5), “even in some hotels and some tourist areas, communication with English language is still a big problem” (P18).

Summary

From the data presented in the response to the six interview questions from the 20 research participants, I identified several constituents to address the research question of understanding the lived-experiences of expatriate-teachers’ related to turnover and their own career intentions in the international school industry of China. The descriptive phenomenology used in this study provided research participants the opportunity and open-ended questions to express their respective experiences as expatriate-teachers in China in the past 10 years.

The pilot study with three participants who met the recruitment criteria of this study was first conducted to validate the instrument and remove potential ambiguous wording and redundancy in the open-ended 6 questions of the interview. No changes were made to the interview protocol. In the actual study, 20 research participants who were expatriate-teachers, with employment experience in the international school industry of China, participated in the descriptive phenomenological study. This included 45 minutes to 1-hour interview with each of the participants.

There emerged 19 constituents that formed 6 main themes of the study. The first theme on expatriate-teachers' employment decision, emerged with the following constituents: suitable place to practice international education, better financial incentives, suitable for the IB curriculum, overseas experience, and lack of employment in home country. The second theme on China employment conditions produced the following constituents; internet censorship, high income tax, culture shock, and the restriction of course contents or textbook censorship. The third theme on strong condition and job attributes emerged with the following constituents; staff and students' anxiety, shopping for higher benefit packages, and competition in the industry.

The fourth theme that centered on lack of cohesiveness and camaraderie produced the following constituents: expatriate-teachers are temporary workers, and difficult to maintain a closely-knit staff culture. The fifth theme on a tendency for weak leadership emerged with the following constituents; lack of direction, and minimal guideline from the Chinese government. The last theme on strong positives and negatives in the expatriate teaching arena in the international school industry of China produced these constituents; absence of trade unions, synergy among students, language barrier, and more international schools in China.

In response to the research question, related to the lived-experiences of expatriate-teachers regarding causes of turnover in the international school industry of China, my most significant outcomes were captured in the themes. First, China employment conditions and job attributes (both internal and external) create a significant tendency for teachers to seek other opportunities. Another significant outcome was lack of cohesiveness and camaraderie, which would normally be a positive attribute for a job, but

which is not the case for expatriate-teachers in China. The last significant outcome was the theme that portrayed strong positives and negatives in the expatriate teaching arena. These include the motivators to stay and the incentives to leave. Incentives to leave create considerable anxiety and tension among expatriate-teachers and result in higher than desired attrition.

Chapter 5 provides an interpretation of the results in the context of existing research and knowledge, limitations of the study, and recommendations for further research. Chapter 5 discusses implications related to social change and professional practice including areas of leadership, conflict resolution strategies, and advocacy for expatriate-teachers in the international school industry of China, as identified by research participant to successfully retain expatriate-teachers in the industry. Chapter 5 presents conclusions that may assist in developing a comprehensive understanding of the conceptual framework of the proposed study.

Chapter 5: Discussions, Conclusions, and Recommendations

The purpose of this qualitative descriptive phenomenological study was to identify the factors that affect expatriate-teacher turnover and their career intentions in the international school industry of China. I did so by collecting and analyzing interview data of the lived-experiences from expatriate-teachers, who have worked in the international school industry of China. In the data analysis, 19 constituents emerged. Staff and student's anxiety, competition in the industry, and internet censorship emerged as the highest factors affecting expatriate-teacher turnover, with all the 20 participants responding that the three factors made uncomfortable as expatriate-teachers in the international school industry of China. A total of 18 of 20 research participants noted that there are too many international schools in China and that the third-party recruitment agencies help to foster expatriate-teacher turnover in China, by providing annual opportunities for expatriate-teachers to shop for new teaching positions, by running several employment fairs throughout the year. A total of 17 of 20 participants noted that China is a suitable place to practice international education because China has a lot of international schools and a large expatriate community.

High-income tax is another constituent that was ranked high during data analysis, as a factor that affects expatriate-teacher turnover in the international school industry of China. 17 participants noted that expatriate-teachers are taxed a progressive tax rate that caps at 45%, which accounts for several expatriate-teacher turnovers in the international school industry of China. Other constituents that stood out are that culture shock, inability to maintain a closely-knit staff culture, lack of direction from the Chinese government, absence of trade union, and language barrier.

Interpretation of Findings

I designed this study to answer the research question: What are the lived-experiences of expatriate-teachers regarding the causes of turnover and their own career turnover intentions in the international school industry of China? The results of the research question indicated that several factors and constituents generated from the analysis of the interview data explain expatriate-teacher turnover in the international school industry of China. This section will describe the ways my findings confirm, disconfirm, or extend knowledge in the discipline by comparing them with what has been found in the peer-reviewed literature described in Chapter 2.

Synergy Among Students

From the literature review, Hayden and Thompson (2013) noted that one of the objectives of the internationalized schools in China was to bring students from different cultural backgrounds together, to teach them the value of empathy for one another, international-mindedness, and cultural awareness, in a bid to curtail the violence and hatred among young people from different countries. According to Poole (2018), the international schools in China provided a gold-standard of education, that is inquiry-based, fostered by international mindedness, and globalization. My results supported these views, as students in the international schools were said to be internationally minded and are taught the value of team spirit and to collectively participate in social change activities, through their off-campus CAS programs.

Additional factors and constituents that corroborated with Hayden and Thompson's (2013) and Poole's (2018) are that China was reported to be one of the best places to practice international education, due to the large community of expatriates in the country and the growing number of international schools and the IBO (2019) noted that China is among the countries with the largest number of IB schools. There was an overwhelming consensus among the research participants on the suitability of the IB curriculum in China. With a very large expatriate community in China, the studies of Wright and Lee (2014), Hacking et al. (2018), Cheng and Feng (2017), and Lu and Zhou (2013) noted that China has a diverse mixture of students from many nationalities and suggested an academic curriculum that is capable of providing a bridge to the Chinese culture and politics, that teaches cultural awareness, tolerance, and international mindedness.

Competition in the Industry

In economics, one of the four basic laws of demand and supply, states that when demand increases and supply remains the same, the aftermath is that the increase in demand leads to higher equilibrium price (Chapplelow, 2019). This is one of the situations driving expatriate-teacher turnover in the international school industry of China. Lee et al. (2016) and Zhu and Nyland (2017) reported that there is intense competition among employers in China, to hire and retain expatriate talents, due to high expatriate employee turnover and shortage. Hence, there is high competition among the international schools in China, for the few qualified expatriate-teachers who are in China, and those willing to relocate and work in China.

Language Barrier

According to the World Education Services (WES) (2020), when China joined the World Trade Organization in 2001, the Chinese Ministry of Education (MOE) mandated all the schools in China, both private and public schools to teach the English language from the third grade. The need to ensure that Chinese students and expatriate children, resident in China can speak fluent English language before their high school graduation, reinforced China's obsession for English-medium education, which has continued to fuel the rise of the international schools in China exponentially since 2010 (WES, 2020). A great level of discrepancy was noted by many research participants on the strategy of the Chinese MOE on English language knowledge and mandate for all schools in China, according to Gaskell (2017), there is also a system of segmentation in the English-medium international school market, where Chinese nationals or holders of Chinese passport are not allowed admission into the Type C international schools in China that offer English-medium education.

More International Schools in China

Based on a review of the literature, my results on the rise of the international school industry in China in the past two decades, corroborated with Hacking et al. (2018) and the IBO (2018) reports, that China has remained the frontrunner in the number of international schools that are opened annually. Research results showed that international school establishment is big business in China and new international schools are opened in China quarterly. As a result of this exponential growth, research results purported that shopping for higher

benefit packages, schools that will help to lower expatriate-teachers' income tax, and schools that will offer better financial incentives, became a tradition for the few expatriate-teachers in China, especially, towards the end of each school year and employment contracts. My research results also reported that expatriate-teacher mobility between international schools in China creates anxiety for both the staff and students of the international school in China because it is difficult to maintain a closely-knit staff culture, systematically disrupts a school's resources, and support for students (Paul et al., 2014 & Odland & Ruzicka, 2009).

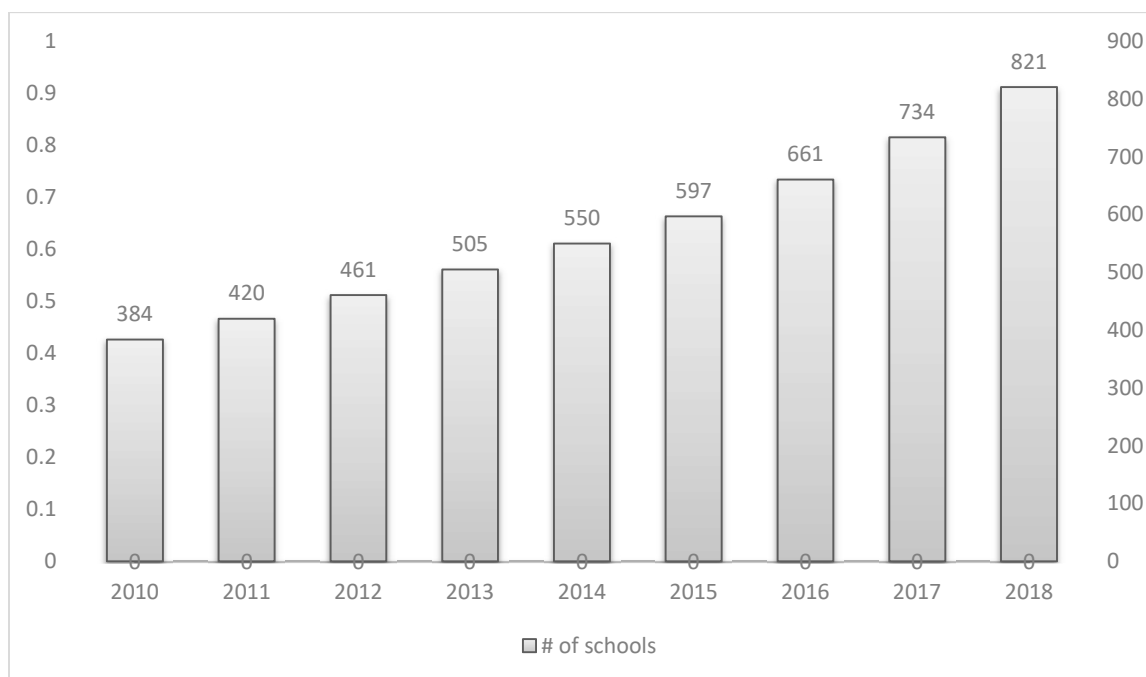


Figure 1. The growth of the international school industry of China 2010 to 2018
Adapted from data collected from WES (2020).

Absence of Trade Union

This finding confirms Poole's (2019) and Bunnell's (2016) investigations on expatriate-teachers in China as international precariat. My research result revealed that the expatriate-teachers in China are regarded as a class of people living without adequate

job security, temporary workers, urban nomads, and people with no advocacy group or trade union as recourse. Participants revealed that trade unions are not allowed in China, as a result, expatriate-teachers in China have no representation or known mediator, in matters of employer and employee conflict resolution in Human Resources Management (HRM).

Odland and Ruzucka's (2009) investigation of teacher turnover in other countries revealed that a teacher's working condition, which is the condition of providing a sense of job security, competitive financial incentive, and adequate leadership, is one of the most important factors that could lead to teacher retention and by extension, reduce teacher turnover. Poole (2019) noted that economic reason is one of the key reasons expatriate-teachers left their home countries to teach in foreign countries, which confirmed my result that one of the reasons expatriate-teachers seek employment in the international school industry of China was lack of employment or competitive financial incentive for teachers in their home countries.

Internet Censorship

None of the previous research in the literature review supported my results of internet censorship and textbook content restrictions, but there was an overwhelming consensus, 20 out of 20 research participants reported their discomfort about internet censorship and restrictions in China. According to Lu and Zhao (2018), internet censorship and restrictions in China was increased since the Chinese government passed the China security network law in 2016, to deal with the challenges of citizen's political expressions, group mobilization, and e-

activism. Some of the participants who have lived and worked in China longer than 5 years also noted that the current type of internet censorship is a new phenomenon, that has increased in the past 5 years. Research results showed that several western websites and mobile applications, such as YouTube, Facebook, Instagram, Google, etc., were blocked in China. Most of the exiting international schools in China before internet law was passed in 2016, were forced to abide by the new law, which confirms Judge, Bowler, and Douglas (2006) that organizations do not need to wait until they are forced to change a major part of their operation, but should rather be prepared for change, by developing contingency plans for major operations.

Limitations of the Study

Limitations to Generalizability

The focus of this study was on the international school industry of China, specifically on the strategies of expatriate-teacher intentions in the industry. Research participants included a diverse set of former and current expatriate-teachers of the international school industry of China in the past 10 years. Consequently, the results may be generalizable within the international school industry of China. Beyond the international school industry of China, however, the results may not be applicable and need to be interpreted with caution.

Limitation to Trustworthiness

One key assumption in the proposal was that research participants would respond honestly to the interview questions. There is no evidence to believe that participants were dishonest or biased in responding to the interview questions. If it was difficult for my participants to respond to the interview questions thoughtlessly, due to language, age, or

health barriers, it would impact on the validity of data I collected from them. According to Giorgi (2012), research participants must be able to express their respective thoughts and feelings efficiently on the experiences being studied. Overall, there were several limitations inherent in descriptive phenomenological qualitative research, because of its dependence on the research skills of the researcher and its time-consuming nature.

Giorgi (1997) noted that the researcher's intrinsic bias is very difficult to determine or detect in descriptive phenomenological research and results are statistically not reliable, even with larger sample size. Therefore, it is sometimes difficult to produce generalizable data, which may also lead to difficulties in establishing reliability and validity. This study was limited by my research participants' unwillingness to disclose pertinent information about their employment, in order not to put their employment in jeopardy. The study was limited by the cost of the resources and time needed for this study. It was also limited because my research participants responded to the interview questions from their respective vantage positions, cultural backgrounds, and ethnicities.

Recommendations

The research participants of this study were a diverse mix of expatriate-teachers with employment experiences in the international school industry of China. The expatriate-teachers worked in international schools in the six main provinces of China. One suggestion for future research that is grounded in one of the limitations of this study is to segment and categorize expatriate-teachers in the international school industry of China and study whether different groups, based on employment level, ethnicity, teaching position, role, nationality respond to expatriate-teacher turnover differently.

For example, an expatriate-teacher of Asian descent working in China may not respond to the causes of expatriate-teacher turnover the same way an expatriate-teacher of North American descent would. Although both categories of expatriate-teachers share the same goal of improving the social and academic lives of the students in the international school industry of China, their contribution, cultural backgrounds, and vantage points are quite different. Also, expatriate-teachers in the international school industry of China are employed in different roles and teams, such as the Middle Leadership Team (MLT), the Senior Leadership Team (SLT), and the Faculty Team (FT) with different employment packages, that could affect how they respond to the causes of turnover in the industry. It would, therefore, be interesting to see if these differences could be examined in a scholarly study.

Another suggestion for future research based on the strength of this research is to investigate the impact of internet and textbook censorships and restrictions on the social and academic lives of the students in the international school industry of China. For example, this study could compare and contrast the quality of education of students in international schools in countries with no internet and textbook censorship and restriction and the students in the international school industry of China. Huang (2019) defines the internet service in China as The Great Firewall (TGF), which is the digital border that divides China from the rest of the world, internet service in China is laden with inefficiencies and a series of filters, which slows the internet traffic and frustrates the users. Huang noted that the Chinese government controls the internet connections into and out of China and a lot of the widely used and popular mobile applications and websites, outside of China are blocked.

The results based on the strength of this study also suggest that more research is needed in understanding the impact of an approved expatriate-teacher trade union membership in expatriate-teacher employment longevity. For instance, this study could look at expatriate-teacher employment longevity in countries where expatriate-teachers belong to approved independent trade unions and employee third-party advocacy groups, and in China where there is no approved expatriate-teacher trade union. Regarding the establishment of trade unions in the international school industry of China, Wrest (2017) noted that part of the obligations of foreign-invested companies (FIC), and by extension the international school industry of China, in restricting trade unions in the industry is the risk of the FICs westernization of their local employees. Additionally, research can be conducted on stakeholder theory on expatriate-teacher trade union membership, support, and enthusiasm for third-party advocacy in the international school industry of China.

Using the qualitative descriptive phenomenological method to study the causes of expatriate-teacher turnover in the international school industry of China, I collected and analyzed the lived-experiences of expatriate-teachers. The 19 constituents from my qualitative study are worthy of further study, using either the quantitative or mixed-method approach, to get a deeper understanding of the potential role each constituent plays, regarding the causes of expatriate-teacher turnover in the international school industry of China.

Implications

Positive Social Change

A significant implication of this research study is positive social change in the international school industry of China, especially in the Human Resource Management

(HRM) departments, students' social and academic wellbeing, and the overall wellbeing of expatriate-teachers in the international school of China. According to Paul et al. (2014), teacher turnover in schools systematically disrupts a schools' social trust, HRM resources, and support for students. Chris (2016) reported that teacher turnover creates negative consequences for students' education in many ways, especially students from low-income families. A study conducted in New York City schools revealed that students in schools with higher teacher turnover scored lower in the main subjects such as mathematics and English Language (Ronfeldt et al., 2011).

The findings of this study are important because they exposed some of the root causes of the looming expatriate-teacher turnover in the international school industry of China. The results imply that a combination of strategies, such as appropriate and competitive recruitment packages, adequate leadership, and trade union membership can facilitate a positive approach to retention among the expatriate-teachers working in the international schools in China and by extension, facilitate the positive social change agenda, by improving the social and academic wellbeing of students in these schools.

Ingersoll et al. (2018) and Burke (2017) studies on the GTEP, and the aim of these institutions to tackle the current global international teacher shortage crisis, especially the shortage of western expatriate-teachers in international schools in non-English speaking countries. Also, Schuler, Jackson, and Tarque (2011); Shaffer (2019); and Sullivan (2014) studied different views on expatriate adjustments overseas, strategies of supporting overseas assignment, and managing global talents. The results of these studies support the fact that any HMR strategy that reduces employee turnover, got a potential impact on positive social change. Soundarapandiyan and Ganesh (2015) noted

that appropriate HRM strategies to combat expatriate-teacher turnover in the industry may help to maintain a stable and closely-knit staff community in international schools. The research results and recommendations of this study will help to reduce expatriate-teacher turnover and create a healthy working condition for expatriate-teachers in international schools in China.

Ma et al. (2015) noted that effective recruiting and retaining of expatriate-employees are important for every multinational organization to survive in the intensive global competition. Lee et al. (2016) and Zhu and Nyland (2017) noted that there is intense competition among employers in China to hire and retain expatriate talents. As Ronfeldt et al. (2011) noted, teacher turnover impacts on students' performance, because teacher turnover changes the distribution in the quality of teachers in schools. Empirically, applying the recommendations of this study may reduce expatriate-teacher turnover in the international school industry of China, as well as reduce the disruptive effects of expatriate-teacher turnover in the social and academic lives of the students in the international schools in China, which will in turn help to accomplish the mission statement of the IBO (2017), of developing students who will become global citizen, by promoting international-mindedness, becoming lifelong learners, and helping to make our world more peaceful, through the promotion of intercultural understanding.

Recommendation for Practice

The objective of this study was to understand the perceptions of expatriate-teachers in China regarding turnover in the international school industry of China. In a study of workgroup salary dispersion and turnover intention in China He et al. (2015) reported that employee turnover is a huge problem in China, because the replacement

cost associated with hiring, selecting, relocation, and training of an expatriate-employee is high, and in some cases, may lead to constant human resource budget deficit in multinational organizations. It would help human resource managers in the international schools in China to restructure their human resource practices, to reduce expatriate-teacher turnover in their respective schools. My research was essential because of the rapid economic growth in China, the huge middle class of Chinese families, and expatriate families living and working in China, which have continued to increase and have continued to demand international education for their school-aged children (Suen & Bing, 2016).

Ma and Trigo (2012) noted that since 2008, Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) in China has risen to about 92.4 billion US dollars, which has significantly boosted the quest for expatriate talents among multinational companies in China. This invariably buttresses the importance of implementing appropriate HRM strategies of expatriate-teacher retention, not only because it is expensive to hire new expatriate-teachers, but because there is a growing high demand among international schools in China to employ expatriate-teachers. Another recommendation for practice that my research results provide is that when appropriate expatriate-teacher retention strategies are implemented in international schools, expatriate-teacher work morale will be improved, organizational effectiveness, and productivity is enhanced.

Conclusion

The purpose of this qualitative descriptive phenomenological study was to identify the factors that affect expatriate-teacher turnover in the international school industry of China. This was an important study because teacher turnover disrupts the

social and academic lives of the students and a school's HRM budget (Paul et al. (2014). This study is also important because expatriate-teacher turnover significantly affects globalization and international businesses among nations (Hyounae, Vincent, and Manisha, 2013). Researchers have studied the impact of teacher turnover in other countries, Chris (2016) and Ronfeldt et al. (2011), including the international schools in Tanzania, Indonesia, Egypt, and Argentina, Hardman (2001). However, none of the studies focused on the expatriate-teacher turnover in the international school industry of China, even though Poole (2018) noted that the international school industry of China is a fairly new phenomenon. It is also an industry with strong potential for positive social change impact due to the impact the international school industry of China makes on students and its importance in sustaining globalization and international relations.

My research results indicated that deploying an appropriate HRM strategy that reduces expatriate-teacher turnover in the international school industry, can foster employment longevity, a positive, and supportive expatriate-teacher reaction in the international school industry of China. I recommend that the accreditation bodies of the international school industry of China, such as the IBO and the CIS include the provision of adequate expatriate-teacher advocacy and leadership standards and benchmark in their accreditation requirements. As noted by Melin and Enarsson (2020), trade unions foster and favor lower staff turnover and employees' satisfaction, which by extension helps in boosting organizational productivity.

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Appendix A: Letter of Introduction and Recruitment

Good day, I am a doctoral student at Walden University inviting your voluntary participation in my research about the strategies of expatriate-teacher retention in the international school industry of China. The purpose of this qualitative descriptive phenomenological study is to identify the factors that affect expatriate-teacher turnover in the international education industry of China.

Participant's eligibility for this study includes the following criteria: (a) expatriate-teachers who are currently working in international schools in China in the past 10 years (b) expatriate-teachers who have worked in the international school of China in the past 10 years. These expatriate-teachers will be recruited from different international schools across China. I am positive that your experience and perspective on the phenomenon would contribute greatly to the study. Hence, I am extending this invitation to you, to ask for your participation in the research.

The importance of this study to the field of management is the fact that any human resource strategy that will enhance the academic and social wellbeing of students in the international school industry of China is regarded as a positive social change strategy. Schools with low teacher turnover have students who are confident, stable, and perform better academically than those in schools with high teacher turnover because teacher turnover harms student's performances.

This study is also significant because it may uncover retention strategies that will help international schools in China. Appropriate strategies to combat expatriate-teacher turnover in the industry may also help to maintain a stable and closely-knit staff

community in these schools, which is vital to the achievement of the long-term organizational goals of the international schools in China.

If you would be interested in participating in this study, kindly confirm your interest by responding to this email confirming your interest. Should you require additional information or have questions regarding this study or your intended interest, you may reply to this email. Thank you in advance for your kind consideration.

Respectfully,

Richard IK Ihejieto

Appendix B: Interview Questions

Interview Questions

1. Can you please share with me the experiences that led you to seek employment as a teacher in an international school in China?
2. What are the most challenging aspects of your employment at an expatriate-teacher in China?
3. What are your experiences regarding the causes of turnover as an expatriate-teacher in the international school industry of China?
4. Could you tell me your experience of not having some of your colleagues back at school at the beginning of every end of the school year, due to high turnover in the industry?
5. Can you tell me more about your experience with leadership in terms of enhancing expatriate-teacher retention in the industry?
6. Are there any other insights you gained from your experiences as an expatriate-teacher in the international school industry of China that you wish to share with me before we close the discussions?

Probes:

Can you tell me more about this experience?

What did this experience mean for you?

Appendix C: Consent Form

You are invited to take part in a study about the strategies of expatriate-teacher retention in the international school industry of China. The purpose of this study is to identify the factors that affect expatriate-teacher turnover in the international school industry of China. Participant's eligibility criteria are as follows: (a) expatriate-teachers who are currently working in the international school industry of China in the past 10 years (b) expatriate-teachers who have worked in the international school industry of China in the past 10 years. I am positive that your experience and perspective on the phenomenon would contribute greatly to the study. Hence, I am extending this invitation to you, to ask for your participation in the study. Participation will involve a one-on-one interview that will last for about an hour. Participation is totally voluntary, and participants can withdraw at any time by contacting me via email.

I obtained your name/contact info via LinkedIn. This form is part of a process called "informed consent" to allow you to understand this study before deciding whether to take part. This study is being conducted by a researcher named; Richard Ihejieta, who is a doctoral student at Walden University.

Background Information:

The purpose of this study is to identify the factors that affect expatriate-teacher turnover in the international school industry of China.

Procedures:

If you agree to be in this study, the following will be involved;

- A one-on-one interview with the researcher
- Interview will last for about an hour

- Interview will be conducted in person or via Skype
- Research participants will be given 15 minutes to check the accuracy of data collected after the interview

Here are some sample questions:

- Can you please share with me the experiences that led you to seek employment as a teacher in an international school industry of China?
- What are the most challenging aspects of your employment at an expatriate-teacher in China?
- What are your experiences regarding the causes of turnover as an expatriate-teacher in the international school industry of China?
- Could you tell me your experience of not having some of your colleagues back at school at the beginning of every school year, due to high turnover in the industry?

Voluntary Nature of the Study:

This study is voluntary. You are free to accept or turn down the invitation. No one will treat you differently if you decide not to be in the study. If you decide to be in the study now, you can still change your mind later. You may stop at any time.

Risks and Benefits of Being in the Study:

Being in this type of study involves minimal risks or minor discomforts, such as loss of privacy and loss of personal leisure time. But being in this study would not pose a risk to your safety or wellbeing. The importance of this study to the field of management is the fact that any human resource strategy that will enhance the academic and social wellbeing of students in the international school

industry of China is regarded as a positive social change strategy.

Payment:

The researcher will be thankful for your participation in this study, please note that participation is voluntary and there will be no payment involved.

Privacy:

Reports coming out of this study will not share the identities of individual participants. Details that might identify participants, such as the location, age, gender, or organization of the research participant will not be shared. The researcher will not use your personal information for any purpose outside of this research project. Data will be kept secured in a password-protected computer and backed up in a password-protected hard drive. Data will be kept for a period of at least 5 years, as required by the university.

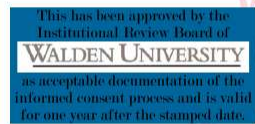
Participants may print or save a copy of the informed consent.

Contacts and Questions:

You may ask any questions you have now. Or if you have questions later, you may contact the researcher by phone at +971509288376 or email at richard.ihejieto@waldenu.edu. If you want to talk privately about your rights as a participant, you can call the Research Participant Advocate at my university from within the USA, 001-612-312-1210 from outside the USA, or email address irb@mail.waldenu.edu) if you need further clarification. Walden University's approval number for this study is **01-07-20-0358742** and it expires on **January 6th, 2021**.

Obtaining Your Consent:

If you feel you understand the study well enough to make a decision about it, please indicate your consent by replying to this email with the words, "I consent."



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